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# CHIUSHINGURA,

OR

# THE LOYAL LEAGUE.

## TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

THE "Chiushingura" is, or at least was, one of the most popular and best known romances in Japan. It is easy to understand why such should be the case, the main object of the tale being to glorify "chiushin" or loyal heartedness, the supreme virtue of the Bushi class under the old order of things that passed away with the year 1868. The story is, as a mere story, not unskilfully constructed, and the variety of its incidents is sufficient to interest even the reader of the sensation novels of the period; while to those who still preserve some lingering affection for the quaint and picturesque national life that ended with the last decade, to be replaced by the vulgar and common-place existence of the day, the following pages, as descriptive of old-world manners and already obsolete sentiments, a portion of a curious mediæval system that has lasted down to our own times, will not, it is hoped, be altogether unpleasing.

Many little points naturally occur in the narrative which only an intimate study of Japanese life can make plain or of interest, but their fidelity to truth is apparent in every feature, to the reader conversant by study or residence with the Japanese. Witness the solicitude of Okaru's mother at parting with her child, that she should apply the moxa occasionally—a favorite and much used native remedy for various illnesses, that the girl should have *nose-paper*—used in lieu of handkerchiefs. Also the reference to the watchman's clappers—two smooth billets of hard wood carried by private night-watchmen to frighten off thieves. These and countless other trivialities are so simply interwoven with the tragic events of the tale, as to create a fresh naturalness which even the distant age and scene of the story do not impair.

The poems in the appendix show the vein of Japanese ideas in this direction, but the essence of the original seems hardly to have been preserved; and the pieces are more curious in ingenuity of translation than valuable for intrinsic merit.

HOFFMAN ATKINSON.

The title "Chiushingura" is hardly translatable, and is a notable example of the Japanese love of a play upon words. "Chiushin" may mean either "loyal-heartedness" or "loyal followers"; and "kura" (gura) signifies a treasury or storehouse, while it is also the first half of the name of the popular hero, Knranosuke, of the historical episode of the "Forty-seven Ronin," upon which the romance is founded, and which has been so pleasantly told by Mr. Mitford in his admirable "Tales of Old Japan." The translator, therefore, without attempting to render the native title, has chosen that of "The Loyal League," as fairly indicating the nature of the story, and preserving as much of the spirit of the original title as could be preserved in a single expression.

The translation, it should be premised, was made long since, in Europe, without the possibility of assistance; and although it has been revised with as much care as the limited leisure and still more limited scholarship of its author have permitted, there are, doubtless, numerous inaccuracies to be detected in it by those better versed in the language and literature of Japan than himself: for which an indulgent consideration is claimed.

The translation is made partly from the text of the abbreviated form in which the story is more commonly met with, but mainly from that of the, "joruri" (or musical romance) in which the tale is amplified and adapted for theatrical recitation.

A few explanatory additions, necessary to make the story plain to the English reader, have been incorporated with the translation, which is throughout, and purposely, a free one, and in some instances it has been found advisable to leave untranslated, or to translate shortly, portions of the original.

# PREFACE OF THE AUTHOR.

EVERY one knows that, to enjoy a savory dish, one must eat some of it; and the confusion of a country where the loyal and brave deeds of worthy samurai remain unnoticed is like that of a dark night, when not so much as a star-twinkle is to be seen; which is the reason why I have written down what follows.

# BOOK THE FIRST.

## What Happened at Tsuruga-oka.

AFTER the Shogun of the Ashikaga family, Taka-uji ko, had overthrown Nitta Yoshisada, profound peace reigned throughout the land. The Shogun built a palace at Kioto, and the fame of his achievements penetrated into every corner of the country.

All the people yielded to his authority, bowing down before him as the grass bends to the breeze, and the imperial might spread its protecting wings over the empire.

In commemoration of his success, the Shogun caused a shrine to be erected to Hachiman* at Tsuruga-oka, and sent his younger brother, Ashikaga-Sahiyoye-no-kami-Nawoyoshi-ko, to act as his deputy at the inauguration of the newly completed building.

Towards the close of the second month of the first year of the nengo Riyakuo (A.D. 1338,) Nawoyoshi accordingly arrived at Kamakura. The Lord Moronawo, Duke of Musashi, and Prime Councillor under His Majesty the Shogun, a haughty nobleman of stern aspect and insolent manners, received His Highness at the guard-house that stood at the entrance of the exercising ground in front of the

* The God of War; much honored in the earlier days of the Shogunate, but hardly reverenced at the present day.

shrine. Within the curtain of the guard-house, Wakasanosuke Yasuchika, younger brother of Momonoi, Lord of Harima, and Yenya Hang'wan Takasada, a baron of Hakushu, gentlemen-in-waiting† to the Shogun, were on duty together. Nawoyoshi, mounting the steps of the guard-house, seated himself, motioning Moronawo to a place on his left, while the two gentlemen-in-waiting took up their position below. At His Highness's command the attendants brought forward a chest, and set it down in front. Nawoyoshi, pointing to it, said:

*Nawoyoshi*—"Among the helmets contained in this chest is one which belonged to Nitta Yoshisada, who was defeated by our brother Takauji, and who was presented with it by the Emperor Godaigo. Nitta, it is true, was our enemy; but he was a descendant, in the elder line, of the Seiwa family, a Genji house; and the helmet which he wore was a five-fold one. Wherefore, it is our will that it should not be thrown aside, but should be preserved in the treasury of the shrine."

"Your Highness's command surprises me;" cried the Duke of Musashi, upon hearing the order. "Many Hatamoto, both of high and low degree, claim descent from the Seiwa stock, as well as Nitta, and will presume to see themselves honored in the distinction thus accorded to the helmet worn by him. I venture, therefore, to advise your Highness to rescind your order."

*Wakasanosuke.*—"Nay, my lord, I hardly think so. It seems to me that His Majesty hopes by this device to bring to submission, without having recourse to force, the disbanded partisans of Nitta, trusting to the effect which his generosity in thus honoring their leader will have upon them. Your counsel is not seasonable."

The words were hardly out of his mouth when Moronawo exclaimed angrily—

*Moronawo:*—"Yah! you dare to interrupt me, Moronawo, and tell me my counsel is not seasonable! Round the spot where Nitta was slain, forty-seven helmets that had fallen off the heads of their

† Lit.—officers charged with the duty of entertaining guests.

dead wearers were found; and if the contents of this coffer should be placed in the treasury without being identified, and it should turn out afterwards that Nitta's helmet is not among them, what ridicule would be incurred! Away with you."

The color mounted to Wakasanoske's face; but Yenya Hangnwan interposed.

*Yenya:*—"Kowa!—what your Lordship says is undeniable. Still, there is something in Wakasanoske's words. I beg to appeal to your Highness."

And, as he spoke, he was glad with the idea that he had averted a quarrel.

*Nawoyoshi:*—"Our will is, that the wife of Yenya should be brought here."

She was accordingly sent for; and after a short interval the Lady Kawoyo, the beautiful wife of Yenya, magnificently dressed in court costume, entered the exercise ground. Her face was powdered, and the brilliancy of her appearance rivalled the lustre of a gem, as, with bare feet and long sweeping train, she modestly advanced toward the guard-house, and prostrated herself respectfully before His Highness.

*Moronawo* (who was an admirer of the sex):—"We are obliged to you, lady. His Highness has commanded your attendance; pray come nearer"—assuming a soft manner as he spoke.

*Nawoyoshi* (regarding her):—"It is true that we have sent for you. Some time since, during the rebellion in Genko (A. D. 1331), Godaigo Tenwo bestowed a helmet that His Majesty had himself worn at the capital, upon Nitta Yoshisada; and the latter doubtless wore it upon the day of his death. It is supposed to be among the helmets contained in yonder coffer, but there is no one here who can pick it out. We have heard that the wife of Yenya was, at the time we refer to, one of the twelve Naishi, * and if she can recognize the helmet in question we request her to point it out."

The Lady Kawoyo listened modestly to His Highness's command, and replied softly:

* These were noble ladies of the Mikado's court.

"Your Highness's command honors me beyond my merits. Every morning and evening His Majesty's helmet was in my hands, and I was present at the bestowal of it upon Nitta. Indeed, it was from my hands that the latter received it; accompanying his grateful acceptance with the following declaration:—Man lasts but one generation, but his name may endure forever. When I go forth to battle I shall burn the precious perfume, which now leads its scent to it in the helmet thus graciously presented to me; and if I should die upon the battle-field, the foe to whom my head will fall a prize will know by the fragrance that he has taken the head of Nitta Yoshisada.'"

"Your answer, lady," exclaimed His Highness, as the wife of Yenya ceased speaking, "makes the matter most clear. Ho! there; take out the forty-seven helmets in yonder coffer, and show them one by one to the Lady Kawoyo."

The attendants hastened to obey His Highness's behest; and, opening the coffer, exhibited the helmets one by one. After a number had been examined, they came upon a five-fold helmet with a dragon crest, which the Lady Kawoyo immediately recognized by the odor still clinging to it, as the one bestowed upon Nitta by the Emperor Godaigo. The helmet thus recognized was delivered to Yenya and Wakasanoske who immediately conveyed it to the treasury of the shrine, and there deposited it.

The Lady Kawoyo, left alone with Moronawo, addressed that nobleman with some embarrassment.

*Kawoyo:*—"My lord, pray excuse me. My duty being performed, and permission given me to retire, it would not be fitting that I should remain here longer. I beg, therefore, to take leave of your lordship."

Moronawo, however, coming close up to her, detained her.

*Moronawo.*—"Ma, an instant, pray. Your duties to-day are over, and I venture to ask you to look at something I have to show you. His Highness's sending for you was a most fortunate thing for me,

—just as if the gods were desirous of bringing us together. You know that I am fond of putting my thoughts into verse, and, day after day, I have asked Yoshida Kenko * to assist me in composing some lines to you, which were to have been sent to you. You will find them in this paper," slipping a folded letter into her sleeve-pocket. "I hope you will look upon them favorably. You might give me your answer now, by word of mouth."

The letter was addressed to the Lady Kawoyo—different enough in face and form from the Musashi stirrup † from whom it purported to come. And the wife of Yenya, as she read the address, trembled with shame and confusion, yet feared to cast reproach at Moronawo, lest disgrace should attach to her husband's name. At first she thought of showing it to her husband; but, recollecting that it would only make him angry and might cause trouble, she simply threw the letter back without a word. She afterwards, however, picked it up and returned it to Moronawo, who, incensed at its rejection, and determined not to let the present opportunity slip, continued to press his suit, hoping by importunity to extract a favorable answer; but in vain.

*Moronawo:*—"Know you that I am the Duke of Musashi? that on my will depends the weal or woe of the Empire? that your husband's fate hangs upon your decision?—Do you hear me?"

Kawoyo could only answer with her tears, when Wakasanoske opportunely returned, and, seeing that some insult had been offered to her, cleverly interposed.

*Wakasa:*—"Lady Kawoyo, your duty is accomplished, and permission has been accorded you to retire. Ought you not, out of respect to His Highness, to avail yourself of it?"—motioning her to withdraw as he spoke.

* Yoshida Kenko, a famous professor of verse making.

† Moronawo, as Lord of Musashi, had designated himself upon the cover of the letter as a Musashi Stirrup, Musashi being famous for the manufacture of stirrups.

Moronawo saw that Wakasanoske suspected something; and determined not to show any weakness, cried angrily,

*Moronawo:*—"Yah! again you dare to thrust yourself in my way. If the Lady Kawoyo withdraws it is by my permission, not by yours. Kawoyo desires me, according to her husband's secret wish, to instruct him how to discharge the duties of his office with perfect propriety—cannot you understand that? And Yenya, though a Daimio, seeks my aid; while you, a petty fellow who can only keep your mean estate through the favor of some superior, take care, and remember that a word from me will suffice to bring you into the clutches of the executioner."

The color mounted into Wakasanoske's face at this insolent speech, and he grasped the handle of his sword with force enough to crush it. Remembering that he was within the grounds of the War-god's shrine, and within the precincts of the palace, he had restrained himself when Moronawo had previously insulted him; but this last trial overcame his utmost patience, and he was on the point of making it a life and death quarrel, when His Highness's fore-runners came rapidly up, clearing the way with loud shouts for their lord's passage.

In the confusion, Wakasanoske was obliged to defer the hour, but still treasured the hope of vengeance. Thus, Moronawo, with a good fortune the reverse of merited, escaped destruction; and the next morning Yenya, ignorant of the ill-turn which his superior had played him, followed in his suite.

Nawoyoshi returned at a slow pace to the palace, and his authority was everywhere reverently acknowledged; while his servants held their heads proudly erect, and the war-helmets in His Highness's armory were laid by, arranged in peace-betokening order, according to the letters of the I-ro-ha.

Thus a profound tranquillity reigned in the land; throughout which, not to harm a head-piece became an universally-observed rule.

## BOOK THE SECOND.

### The Rage of Wakasanoske.

ON an evening in the Yayoi* month, when the ancient pines that for many ages had guarded the ancestral home of his lord were already becoming enveloped in the deepening gloom, Kakogawa Honzo, a man of some fifty years of age, of ripe intelligence and long experience, was pacing to and fro in the courtyard of the castle, which the servants, chattering somewhat noisily over their task, were putting in order, according to custom, when the following utterance of one of them aroused his attention.

*Servant.*—"Yesterday, at Tsuruga-oka, our master was grievously insulted by the Lord Moronawo. They talk of nothing else in the servants' quarters. Indeed, it is said that force was used, and our master ill-treated."

*Honzo* (interrupting):—"Yai, yai! what is all this disturbance about, what have you to do with such matters? If your work is finished, away with you, every one."

Honzo spoke good-humoredly enough; and, just as he ended, the clatter of footsteps resounded in

* "Development month," the 3d of the late national calendar, answering to the middle of our April.

the verandah, and his only daughter Konami and her mother Tonase came together out of one of the apartments.

*Honzo* (sharply):—"How is this? Both of you absent from attendance on your mistress, amusing yourselves instead of looking after your duties. Shame upon you,—ten thousand times shame upon you!"

*Konami.*—"Nay, father, our mistress is more than usually well to-day, she is now quietly asleep; is it not so, mother?"

*Tonase.*—"Yes. But, Honzo, our mistress has just been telling me a story she heard from Konami about our lord Wakasanoske and Moronawo having quarrelled after the close of yesterday's ceremony at Tsuruga-oka. Our mistress is very anxious about it."

*Honzo.*—"Now, now, Tonase—why do you listen to such stupid rumors? Have a care, have a care! And so, daughter, you heard all this after the ceremony, did you? How people talk, to be sure—but the whole thing is ridiculous; I must go and put your mistress's mind at ease about what you have told her."

He was on the point of carrying out his intention when a warder came up, exclaiming: "Rikiya Sama, the son of Ohoboshi Yuranoske, has arrived."

*Honzo.*—"Ha! he will have come with some message about the reception of the guests at court to-morrow. Tonase, hear what he has to say, and inform our lord of his message. And stay, Rikiya and Konami are betrothed; so treat him civilly. I must away to your mistress."

So saying, Honzo hurried off in the direction of the inner apartments.

*Tonase* (approaching her daughter):—"Your father is just as difficult to deal with as ever: is he not? As to my bearing the message, I don't agree with him. I am sure that you ought to receive it instead. You and your affianced would, of course, like to see each other and be with each other a little; therefore, you ought to take my place and receive Rikiya, ought you not?"

But Konami only turned red, and, although her mother repeated the question, gave no answer. The latter, perceiving her daughter's embarrassment, immediately feigned an attack of hysterics.

*Tonase.*—"Ai, ta, ta, ta,—daughter,—rub my back, please; I have been fearing this ever since the morning. It is another attack of my usual hysteria. Ah! it will be impossible for me to receive the messenger. Ai, ta, ta, ta,—daughter,—I must get you to receive him instead of myself. Take care to treat him civilly, and offer refreshment. This fit quite prevents me. Mind you offer refreshments; and, when Rikiya has partaken of them, take his message carefully and make my excuses to him."

With these words Tonase hobbled off toward the inner apartment. Konami, bowing after her mother with an expression of entreaty, said to herself, "Of late Rikiya has become very dear to me, but what am I to say? How shall I act when I meet him?"

A timid blush dyed her soft cheek as she made these reflections, and her little heart went "pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat," like the tiny waves* breaking on the sea-shore.

Presently, Rikiya was announced, and immediately afterward entered the apartment, saluting Konami courteously. He was a handsome youth; and, as he and Konami shyly interchanged glances, they were mutually charmed with each other. Neither could find a word, modesty dyeing her cheek with the hue of the plum-blossom, rivalled by the blush of the wild cherry that overspread the face of her betrothed; and though the pair were alone their behavior was irreproachable.†

*Konami* (after a confused pause):—"Welcome, sir. We hardly know how to thank you for the trouble you are put to on our behalf. I am charged with the duty of receiving your communication. Pray let me know what it is"—approaching her betrothed as she uttered the last words.

*Rikiya* (drawing back with an offended air):—"Hold! this is scarcely civil. All the world knows that when a message is to be received, the forms of politeness ought to be rigidly observed." "My

* A pun upon her name "Konami," *i.e.* "wavelet."

† Lit., "no pillow had to pass judgment."

lord Yenya," Rikiya continued, "informs Wakasanoske that His Highness's order is, that both my lord and yours be at their posts to-morrow morning at the 7th hour precisely (4 A. M.), and in everything obey, without failing in any particular, the directions of Moronawo."

As the words flowed softly like water from the youth's mouth, Konami was struck with admiration, and could not find a word to say in reply: so completely was she under the charm of his address. At this juncture a partition slid back, and Wakasanoske, who had heard the whole conversation from an adjoining room, entered the apartment.

*Wakasa.*—"Oh, I understand—many thanks, messenger. Yesterday when I took leave of His Highness, I somehow missed Hang'wan. To-morrow morning, is it? At the 7th hour precisely? I understand. You may assure your master I shall not fail to be there. Commend me to your lord, and thank him for me; and I must thank you, too, messenger."

*Rikiya.*—"Your lordship, then, will permit me to take leave. And to you, lady," addressing Konami, "I beg to express my thanks for having received my message."

So saying, Rikiya courteously withdrew. Tonase, who had all this time remained hidden behind a screen, where, after leaving her daughter upon a pretended plea of illness, she had concealed herself, also slipped away unperceived. Hardly had she disappeared when Honzo entered the apartment.

*Honzo.*—"Ah, your lordship is here? I am very sorry to have to remind you that your lordship's presence at the palace is required so early as the 7th hour. It is already midnight. Will it not be well to take some rest?"

*Wakasa.*—"Is it indeed so late? But hark ye, Honzo, I must have some talk with you in private. Send your daughter away."

*Honzo*—(to Konami): "Do you hear? If we want you we will clap hands. Away with you."

"I was desirous," pursued Honzo, after his daughter had withdrawn, approaching his lord, whose

face had assumed an expression of the deepest concern, "I was desirous of being allowed to inquire what was troubling your lordship? I pray you, tell me everything without any reserve."

*Wakasa.*—"You must swear to me that you will attend to what I am about to say, whatever may be the results, without making a single objection."

*Honzo.*—"Surely, my lord, that is a strange request to your servant, whose duty it is to do whatever he may be directed."

*Wakasa.*—"So, then, you will not give me your oath as a Bushi."

*Honzo.*—"Nay, not so,—but first I would ask to hear the whole matter from your lordship."

*Wakasa.*—"And then you will give me your advice! Nay, but perhaps you would oppose my wishes."

*Honzo.*—"Is not my lord assured of his servant's respectful attention and devotedness? I will not interrupt your lordship by a single word. I pray you, therefore, tell me all, now; and be not angry with this fellow Honzo, who will treasure up in his inmost heart whatever you may deign to confide to him."

*Wakasa.*—"Well, then, I will tell you everything. As you know, the Kanrei Nawoyoshi came down to Kamakura a short time since, to inaugurate the completed shrine at Tsuruga-oka. Yenya and I were appointed gentlemen-in-waiting to His Highness, and were commanded by His Majesty the Shogun to put ourselves under the orders of Moronawo, a nobleman of great experience in all ceremonial matters. Moronawo took to riding the high horse, and day by day grew harsher and stricter with me, who am one of the youngest and least experienced of all the samurai in Kamakura. At last his insolence passed all bounds, and I would have ere now cut him in pieces, were it not that the respect due to His Highness has always forbidden me to give way to my passion, and wreak vengeance upon my enemy. But my patience is exhausted. To-morrow, come what may, I will throw back his insults in

his face before the whole court. My honor as a samurai is at stake. This hand shall strike the villain dead. And you, Honzo, beware of attempting to restrain me. My wife, and you too, have remonstrated with me of late, because of my quick temper gaining more and more the mastery over me. Yet how often have I put a restraint upon myself? A samurai, with the spirit of a samurai, I can no longer brook these repeated insults. You will say, I am but courting destruction, bringing grief upon my wife. Too true, perhaps; but the sword I wear, and the dread archer-god to whom I pray, command me to wipe out the insults to my honor. Even though I die not upon the battle-field, if I slay this Moronawo, a service will be done to the Empire, and the name of my house will be saved from infamy. I have spoken thus freely with you that my motives may be known, and that it may not be said of me afterward that I rushed upon my fate in a mere fit of passion, like a mad fool or a stupid wild-boar."

*Honzo.*—"Most clearly have you put the matter, my lord. You have indeed acted with wisdom throughout. Your servant, under like circumstances, would have lost all control."

*Wakasa* (angrily):—"Yai! Honzo, what say you? I have acted with wisdom, you would have lost control? What means this? Dare you to insult me?"

*Honzo.*—"Far from your servant any such thought. Citizens, it is true, take the shady side of the road in winter, and the sunny one in summer, to avoid disputes; but the samurai follow no such coward's rule. I pray you excuse my ill-considered words. Search my heart, my lord, and you will find in it no thought of disrespect to your servant's master."

As he uttered the last words Honzo drew his short sword, and with a blow cut off a branch from a pine-tree that stood close to the verandah in front of the room where the conversation was being held: immediately returning the weapon deftly to its scabbard.

*Honzo.*—"Sa! So let the enemies of my lord perish by his hand."

*Wakasa* :—"Look well there, lest there be any one about who can hear what you say."

*Honzo* (after obeying Wakasanoske's direction): "And now, my lord, it is already midnight, pray take some rest: I will myself see to the alarm-clock. Do not delay, my lord."

*Wakasa.*—"I trust that you will not disobey the orders I have just given to you. As to my wife, I shall endeavor to leave in the morning without saying farewell to her."

Bidding Honzo good night he then withdrew. For a few moments Honzo gazed after his lord wistfully; then rousing himself, he bent his steps hastily in the direction of the servants' lodgings.

"Ho, there, some of you," he cried in a loud tone, "saddle a horse for me, quick."

The order was obeyed without delay, and Honzo at once swung himself into the saddle.

*Honzo.*—"Follow me, I go to the castle of Moronawo."

As he spoke, Tonase and Konami came out of the apartment, and hurrying up to him, hung upon his bridle, exclaiming—"Where are you going? We have overheard everything. How, Honzo? You an old man and yet you do not endeavor to moderate our lord's anger by your wisdom? what can this mean? Stay, stay."

And the two women clung beseechingly to his bridle.

*Honzo* (angrily) :—"Silence, both of you. Our lord's life—the existence of his house, are at stake. Mind you do not utter a word about my departure to your master. If you betray me, you, daughter, shall be turned out of my family, and you, Tonase, shall be divorced. Ho, there, (to the servants) I will give you your orders on the way."

Tonase and Konami utter an exclamation of alarm.

*Honzo* (sharply) :—"You are too importunate. Delay not (to the servants) but follow me." With which words he hastily rode off, clouds of dust marking his rapid passage. Tonase and her daughter immediately afterward betook themselves with heavy hearts to the inner apartment.

# BOOK THIRD.

## The Quarrel of Yenya with Moronawo.

A CROWD of nobles, high and low, gorgeously arrayed in the costume of the court, thronged the splendid palace that the Kwanrei of the eight eastern provinces had lately erected at Kamakura, and the banqueting rooms were filled with rows of guests, while the moon and stars still shed their light upon the hills around.

The operatic performers, who had been summoned for the amusement of the guests, hung about the Rear Gate, while the court officials, charged with the reception of the latter, were gathered together about the great gate of the palace, which was already thronged with the brilliant crowd of noblemen and gentlemen with their retainers, when loud cries of "Hai, hai, hai," from the warders of the western gate, gave notice of a fresh arrival. Immediately afterward, the glimmer of numerous lanterns shone in the dusky dawn, and the lord Moronawo, Duke of Musashi, a most proud and haughty nobleman, entered the palace. Dressed in a court suit of blue silk, with a tall yeboshi cap on his head, he assumed the gait of one high exalted over the mass of men, and causing some of his followers to clear the way before him, ordered the rest to betake themselves to their allotted quarters.

The Bannai, Sagisaka, puffed out with his master's importance, and for all the world just like a crane, folded his arms superbly, exclaiming:—

"My lord, the arrangements for to-day's festivities are perfect. As to Yenya and Momonoi, however, strut about as they may with awkward pride, they are as clumsy in their attempts to carry out their duties as puppy-dogs struggling to keep their footing upon a slant roof. It makes one laugh to watch them. As to that fellow Yenya,—by the by, his wife, I hear, has not yet answered your lordship,—your lordship must not let yourself be disturbed by that. Pretty though she be, she is a disagreeable personage; and as to her husband, it is wrong to mention him in the same breath with your lordship, now the first minister to His Highness."

*Moronawo.*—"Yai! don't speak so loud, Kawoyo is a married woman. With the aid of a professional poet, I have again and again expressed my passion for her in verse, but hitherto without success. She has lately, however, got a new maid, I hear, named Karu; I must see if I cannot bribe the wench to assist me. I don't abandon all hope; but if Kawoyo should persist in her disdain, I am anxious that her husband, Yenya, should know nothing of the matter."

While Moronawo and his follower thus conversed together familiarly under the portal of the gateway, one of the samurai of the guard came up hurriedly to them, exclaiming:

*Guard.*—"Just now, as I was sitting on the bench in the guard house, Kakogawa Honzo, the retainer of Wakasanoske, rode up hastily and asked for an immediate audience of the lord Moronawo; saying he had been to your lordship's house but had been told that you had gone to the palace early. He seemed most anxious to have an interview with your lordship; and was accompanied by a number of followers on horseback. What answer shall I make him?"

*The Bannai* (with violence):—"My lord Moronawo is on His Highness's service; such a request for an immediate interview is monstrous. I will to him and see to this."

*Moronawo* (detaining him):—"Stay, stay, I understand it perfectly. Wakasanoske dare not come himself to wreak his revenge upon me for what took place the day before yesterday at Tsuruga-oka, and so sends this fellow Honzo instead, to flatten my nose for me; ha, ha, ha. Don't stir, Bannai; it is some minutes yet short of the 7th hour. Call the wretch here; I will soon put an end to him."

*Bannai.*—"If that is your lordship's will. But look out, fellows," turning to the attendants of Moronawo, and his obsequious follower then wetted with spittle the pin that held the blades of their swords in the handles: and rubbing the muscles of their arms, waited for Honzo, who presently appeared advancing slowly as he arranged his dress. He was followed by several retainers bearing the presents, which he caused to be set down before Moronawo; while he himself fell prostrate, at a respectful distance from that haughty nobleman.

*Hono*—"Hah, if it please your lordship—His Highness the Shogun Taka-uji lately honored my master, Wakasanoske, by entrusting him with the discharge of the duties of an office of great dignity; a good fortune far beyond my master's deserts, who is young and inexperienced in the duties of his post. His household, under these circumstances, venture in their perplexity to request your lordship to act as their master's instructor, and to advise him in the execution of his duty, so that he may perform it satisfactorily and without failing in any point. Thus we all, from our mistress down to him who now addresses your lordship, beg your kind offices, and dare to ask your acceptance of the presents, paltry though they be, which are enumerated in the list I hold in my hand, as a slight mark of our respectful gratitude. If your lordship should listen to our request, we shall never cease to remember the kindness of our reception." With these words he handed a list to the Bannai; who, wonderstruck at the whole proceeding, received it without uttering a word, and unfolding it, read out, after a short pause, as follows:—

*Bannai.*—Memorandum, 30 picture rolls and 30 Ogon. The seare presented by the wife of Wakasanoske.

Item, 20 Ogon. These are presented by the chief councillor, Kakogawa Honzo.

Item, 10 Ogon. These are presented by retainers of Wakasanoske.

As the Bannai finished reading the list, Moronawo opened his mouth wide with astonishment, unable to utter a word, and staring wildly about him; while he exchanged looks with his follower as full of wonder and foolish confusion as if the pair had just heard that Midsummer day was to be celebrated next New year.

Moronawo, at last, found utterance:—"Really, we are ashamed to have put you to this trouble. Bannai (in a whisper), what am I to do."

*Bannai.*—"Well, it seems to me that to decline these gifts would be too harsh a reception of this gentleman's polite intentions. As to assisting his master, too, in the discharge of his duties, doubtless, under present circumstances, Wakasanoske Sama would be put to great distress by a refusal."

*Moronawo* (interrupting Honzo):—"Stop, I am not capable of instructing your master, who is a most intelligent man, and whom it would be absurd for me to pretend to teach. Ho there, Bannai, see that these presents are put away in a secure place. But (turning to Honzo) I had forgotten to offer you tea, pray pardon my rudeness."

Honzo, who, in the space of a turn of the hand, had divined the importance of the favorable acceptance of his gifts, prostrated himself more respectfully than ever.

*Honzo.*—"It is already the 7th hour (4 A.M.), and I must ask leave to retire. To-day the inauguration festivities take place; and I venture once more to entreat you to assist my master with your advice." With these words Honzo rose to his feet and prepared to depart, when Moronawo detained him by the sleeve.

*Moronawo*:—"Nay, nay; would you not like to be present at to-day's festivities?"

*Honzo*:—"Your servant is but a follower, and dare not venture into His Highness's presence."

*Moronawo.*—"Oh, for that matter have no fear, have no fear. No one will dare to say a word to you in my company. Besides, your master, Wakasanoske, is variously employed here and there about the court. You may be present safely, quite safely."

Thus urged, Honzo complied.

"In that case I shall be glad to be allowed to accompany your lordship. I am at your lordship's orders."

Honzo followed Moronawo, congratulating himself upon having purchased his master's life by plastering Moronawo's face with money and gifts; and upon the complete success that had attended his scheme, which had been unhindered by a single hitch. So Honzo, crafty white-haired old rat, kept straight on in the path of fidelity, loyalty and devotion, and passed with Moronawo through the Great Gate.

Almost immediately afterward Yenya Takasada came up in a norimon. His retainers betook themselves to their proper quarters, while Hayano Kampei, an hereditary vassal of Yenya, caused the norimon, in which his master was, to be set down, and rustling in his yellow, figured, wide-pocketed trousers, made for the Great Gate.

*Kampei.*—(in a loud voice) "I have to announce the arrival of Yenya Hang'wan Takasada."

*Gate Ward.*—(coming forward) "Momonoi Sama has just gone in as well as Moronawo Sama. Both asked after your master. It would be well not to delay."

Yenya, alighting from his norimon, exclaimed,

"How, Kampei, am I the last to arrive? How unfortunate that I should be so late?" and hastened through the gate as he spoke, followed by Kampei.

Meanwhile the sound of singing was heard from the interior of the palace, where the festivities had already commenced; and the words of the old song

"Harima's sandy beach we touch
Takasago's noted shore;"

were borne towards the Great Gate, wafted on the breeze which lightly rustled amid the branches of a willow tree that grew hard by. More graceful than the willow itself, a maiden, over whose head some eighteen springs had passed, straight as a pin, with slender eye-brows, who had been brought up in a strict household and was perfectly modest, came up to the gate, accompanied by a number of servants carrying lanterns that bore the device of the house of Yenya.

*Maiden.*—"Ho, there! men, dawn is breaking, and as you cannot enter within the gate, you may retire. . . Kampei, Kampei," continued the girl, looking round after the servants who had accompanied her had returned homeward in obedience to her order, "where can you be? I have a message for you; pray don't delay."

While she was still peering about, Kampei, coming forward in the half-gloom, caught sight of her.

*Kampei.*—"What, Okaru, you here?"

*Okaru.*—"Oh! I am so glad, I wanted so much to see you."

*Kampei.*—"But what does this mean? At night time, without a servant—all by yourself?"

*Okaru.*—"Nay, some servants came with me, but I have just dismissed them, and so am left alone. But I have a message for you from my mistress." And presenting a letter box* to Kampei, the girl continued, "She said I was to ask you to be good enough to hand this to your master, and to tell him to give it to Moronawo as my lady's answer, with her excuses and compliments. And lest there should be some mistake in the middle of all this feasting, my mistress told me to put off giving you the mes-

* Letters in Japan are sent in oblong lacquered boxes (often called and used as glove-boxes by foreigners), which are tied with silk cord or paper string, and sometimes sealed as well.

sage for the night. And so I came here just now, to look for you and ask you to be sure and not omit to deliver these few verses to your master. I have run here so quickly that I am almost dead for want of breath,"—panting as she spoke.

*Kampei.*—"Good! my master shall hand the letter-case to Moronawo. I will go and deliver it; wait for me."

As he spoke, a voice cried loudly from within, "Kampei, Kampei; your master Hang'wan is calling for you. Kampei, Kampei."

*Kampei.*—"Hai, hai, I come. Yeh! have a little patience."

And quitting the girl, the youth hastened toward the palace. He had hardly gone when the Bannai Sagisaka came up with mincing gait, like a heron trampling upon paddy-field lampreys.

*Bannai.*—"Hah, Okaru! how love sharpens one's wits. Just as the fellow was whispering in your ear, to shout out, 'Kampei, Kampei, your master is calling for you!'—a capital idea, was it not? My lord Moronawo has a favor to ask of you, pray accompany me. You know I love you."

And the fellow, as he spoke, endeavored to embrace her.

*Okaru* (escaping from his grasp):—"Cease this rudeness, sir. What, within the precincts of the court you dare act thus villainously? Away ruffian!" eluding a second time his grasp, "away ill-mannered boor that you are."

*Bannai.*—"Don't be so hard. Come, it is still dark enough to prevent any one seeing us, just for a moment."

And seizing her hand he was on the point of dragging her away, when loud cries of "Bannai, Bannai, the lord Moronawo wants you at once. Bannai, Bannai," interrupted him, and two men came forward through the gloom, looking anxiously around. They were not long in catching sight of the Bannai, with whom Okaru was still struggling, and exclaimed angrily, "What are you about, Bannai? the

lord Moronawo has been searching for you some time. What? ill-treating a woman? within the precincts of the court, too? Shame on you, you ill-bred villain."

*Bannai.*—"Yeh, what are you fellows saying?" And quitting his hold of Okaru the crest-fallen scoundrel made his way hurriedly toward the palace.

Kampei appeared immediately afterward, "Hah, Okaru, did you understand my device? That Bannai is well tricked now. I knew that if I were to shout out that his lord wanted him, that he would cry 'stale trick;' and to avoid such a result I bribed those two fellows with a little *saké* to shout out instead of me. He will own the trick is not a stale one for this once, I think; ha, ha, ha. And now that the Bannai's affair is settled, will you not stay and let me talk with you for a little while?" And the youth took her hand as he spoke.

*Okaru.*—(confusedly) "No, no, leave me: why what do you want to say?"

*Kampei.*—"Why leave you? It will be daylight directly. You cannot refuse me." After some further show of reluctance Okaru yielded to her lover's entreaties, exclaiming, however, half repentantly, "But some one may pass by here." As she spoke, the words of the old song "Takasago" were again borne to them upon the breeze:

"Neath the pine tree will we sit."

*Kampei.*—(speaking softly) "Hark! is not the verse apt? let us too, sit down here." And seizing the girl's hand in his, he led her gently away.

Meanwhile the guests were being entertained with various musical and recitative performances, in which the praises of Nawoyoshi, together with felicitations on the prosperity of the Empire, were sung to the sound of drums and kettledrums, while his Highness's continued well-being was the desire of every heart.

Wakasanoske, who had for some time been on the watch for Moronawo, seeing that the latter did not arrive, rambled about the palace in search of him. The long trowsers or court dress were well girded up; his ears were open to every sound; and convulsively grasping his sword handle, he was bent upon slaying his enemy the moment he appeared.

Moronawo, ignorant of Wakasanoske's presence, approached the spot where the latter was standing; and while yet some distance from him, recognized the wrathful noble.

*Moronawo.*—Ho, there! Sir Wakasanoske, you are early at your post. I have to ask pardon for my rudeness to you the other day; though I can offer no excuses. But still I must beg of you to listen to what I have to say." So with these words the wily courtier took both his swords out of his girdle and threw them on the ground at Wakasanoske's feet. "To tell the whole truth," he continued, "I was most rude to you the other day at Tsuruga-oka; and doubtless you were very angry, as indeed you had a right to be. I cannot understand how I came to address such rough words to you. I hardly know what they were; but I shall regret my ill-breeding all my life. See, I am your suppliant. You are a man of the world and will understand me. Were you an ignorant fellow I should doubtless have to dread being cut down by you. I tried to follow you, clasping my hands and begging your forgiveness. Ah! I am an old man, useless enough, useless enough. You must show some favor to my years. See, my swords are at your feet. I am a suppliant before you; it cannot be that you will not listen to me. I know that I have been wrong: wrong in every way and repeatedly; but I and my follower, the Bannai here, entreat you to let your anger cease."

Wakasanoske listened to this bribe-bought flattery, with astonishment. He found the opportunity of vengeance suddenly taken away from him; and that now that the hour to strike had come, he was prevented from striking. The sword that he had so carefully cleaned that morning was useless. He did not attempt to draw it from the scabbard, but allowed his head to fall pensively on his breast while

he stood there tranquil, to the great satisfaction of Honzo, who, half-hidden amid some neighboring bushes, had watched the course of proceedings in contented silence.

*Moronawo.*—"Ho! Bannai, that fellow Yenya! what makes him so late? this gentleman" turning to Wakasanoske, "gives a very different attention to his duties. As to Yenya, he is nothing less than an ill-bred clown, not to have shown his face yet. If he were worthy of his rank he would have a chief councillor who would take care that all his lord's duties were properly fulfilled; but he has none such. Come, sir," turning again to Wakasanoske, "we will go to His Highness. Pray excuse me my wrong-headedness, and do me the honor to accompany me."

*Wakasanoske.*—"I think I must ask your lordship to excuse me, I am not very well; pray do not wait for me."

*Moronawo.*—"I am sorry to hear you are not well, pray what is the matter? Bannai, rub this gentleman's back and send for some cordial."

*Wakasanoske.*—"Nay, I am not so ill as to require that."

*Moronawo.*—"But at all events you will do well to rest awhile. I will see that your duty is taken by a proper person. Bannai, conduct this gentleman to an apartment."

Wakasanoske felt as much embarrassed by this excessive attention as if he had been suddenly invited to enter the Mikado's carriage. However, he accompanied the Bannai, to the delight of Honzo, who, thanking earnestly heaven and earth for the success that had attended his scheme, betook himself to the retainers' quarters.

Immediately afterward Yenya made his appearance hurrying in the direction of the vice-regal apartments. Moronawo, who was standing under a verandah, saw him passing by and called out angrily, "You are late, you are late! what is the meaning of this carelessness? You were to have been here at the 7th hour (about 4 A.M.) precisely. Did you not receive my message to that effect?"

*Yenya.*—"It is true my lord that I am later than I ought to be. I must ask you to excuse me; but I am still in time, I think." So saying he took a letter box from his sleeve pocket, and handed it to Moronawo.

*Yenya.*—"One of my servants came to me with this just now, asking me to give it into your hands. It is from my wife, Kawoyo."

*Moronawo* (taking the box):—Indeed, indeed—ha! I understand, your wife knows that I am fond of verse-making and has sent me some lines of her own for correction."

With these words the Prime Councillor opened the case, and taking out a paper began to read it.

"'A husband's love my life doth shield, Unneeded, all love else I spurn.' *

"Ha! from the new selection of Ancient and Modern Poems. No correction of mine wanted here, it would seem."

Moronawo understood that his suit was rejected, and felt sure that Yenya had opened the box. Angry at the idea, he yet managed to conceal his ill-humor; and with an appearance of unconcern, asked Yenya if he had read the paper.

*Yenya.*—"I saw it just now for the first time."

*Moronawo.*—"H'm, well, the contents—oh, your wife is a model of virtue. See what she sends me. 'A husband's love'—a model of virtue! a model of virtue! what a fortunate man you are! That is the reason probably of your inattentiveness. You stick at home tied to your wife's apron, and give no thought to your duties at the Court."

The disappointed nobleman continued to pour out invectives upon the astonished Yenya, who could make nothing of his superior's conduct, but imagined that he must be under some strange error; for which reason he restrained, though with difficulty, his indignation.

* This rendering simply gives the idea of the original, anything like a translation is impossible.

*Yenya* (with a forced laugh):—"Ha, ha, ha! your lordship is merry; doubtless your lordship has been passing the bottle round a little."

*Moronawo* (angrily):—"Passing the bottle? passing the bottle? what does the clown mean? Passing the bottle or not I manage to attend to the duties of my rank. As for you, you neglect them. Explain that to me. You perhaps have been 'passing the bottle,' or sticking at home glued to your wife's side? You had better take a leaf out of Wakasanoske's book. Oh, your wife is a model of virtue, eh? a charming woman! writes most elegantly! You may well be proud of her. Nay, don't look angry, man; what I say is all true enough. Now your wife's verses here—If you have such a treasure at home, we cannot expect you to come here. You fellows who remain at home remind one of carp-fry in a well. These tiny fish—are you listening to what I say?—think that neither in heaven nor on earth is there any place comparable with the miserable hole, some three or four feet across at the most, in which they live. They have never seen any other place, and when they are brought up from the bottom in a bucket and then thrown into the stream, they cannot make out where they are and flounder helplessly about, until at last they knock their heads against the pillars of some bridge. You, and such as you, are just like these carplets; ha, ha, ha!" Yenya, at this insulting speech, lost his patience and exclaimed angrily,

"You must be out of your senses—you must be mad, Moronawo!"

*Moronawo* (interrupting)—"Pshaw, fellow! darest twit me with being mad? Me, the Prime Councillor! the Lord Moronawo!"

*Yenya* (with increasing anger):—"Then your insults are meant as such."

*Moronawo* (scornfully):—"Stop your chatter; and if meant, what then?"

*Yenya.*—"Why, this then." And drawing his sword, the enraged nobleman made a stroke at Moronawo, which inflicted a deep wound on the latter between the eyebrows, and felled him to the

earth. A second blow clove the crest of his helmet, and he hastily got up from the ground and ran away in a confused manner to escape a third which Yenya was prevented from inflicting by Honzo, who had been a witness of the quarrel, and who now came hastily up and seized the angry lord's arm.

*Honzo.*—"Restrain yourself, sir, I pray you." Yenya struggled to free himself from Honzo's grasp, glaring after his enemy who was making off as well as he could, stumbling at every step, in the direction of the inner apartments.

*Yenya.*—That fellow Moronawo will get away, let me go, Honzo. He shall feel the weight of my arm. Let me go, let me go."

While Yenya was thus endeavoring to shake off Honzo's grasp, a confused sound of voices and of hurrying footsteps was heard, and presently a crowd of courtiers and retainers rushed excitedly forth from the palace across the courtyard, some hastily grasping their swords, while others hurried to the assistance of Moronawo. The whole palace was in an uproar. At both gates the various retainers who were outside kept up a constant knocking, and lanterns were everywhere flashing in the midst of the confusion.

Hayano Kampei, hearing the noise, was filled with anxiety; and running up to the Rear Gate, knocked at it as if he would shatter it into pieces; crying loudly:—"I am Hayano Kampei, clansman of Yenya Hang'wan. My lord is in danger and I must be at his side. Open, open, quick."

*Gate ward.*—"This is the Rear Gate. You must go round to the Great Gate if you are in the suite of some nobleman."

*Kampei.*—"No, no, this gate will do well enough. Besides the Great Gate seems besieged by such a crowd of retainers that it would be impossible to get at it even if mounted on a spirited horse. What is the meaning of all this disturbance?"

*Gate ward.*—"The disturbance is at an end. Yenya grievously insulted the Prime Councillor

Moronawo, for this offence he is to be confined to his house, where he is now being taken in a net-covered norimon."

*Kampei* (much disturbed at hearing this):—Namu sambo,* conveyed home a prisoner?"

He was on the point of hastening after his lord, when he was arrested by the thought, that the sentence of confinement would entail a closure of the gates of the castle. Pacing up and down, uncertain how to act, in the midst of his embarrassment he was joined by the maid Okaru, whom he had left behind when he hurried to the gate to see what was the cause of the uproar.

*Okaru.*—"Oh, Kampei, I have heard all about it. What is to be done? What is to be done?"

The girl clung to her lover, sobbing as she spoke.

Kampei, however, thrust her aside, saying: "Yeh! what is the use of puling? Listen! my honor as a soldier and a clansman is gone. Gone! do you hear? And now nothing remains for me but this" (grasping the handle of his sword).

*Okaru* (with a gesture of affright):—"Kampei, not that, not that, I implore you. You do not know what you are doing in your bewilderment."

*Kampei* (bitterly):—Bewilderment? I may well be bewildered to find that I have been absent from my lord's side in the hour of danger; that men are conveying my lord away, a prisoner, in a net-covered norimon, like a criminal; that the gates of his castle are closed upon him, while I, his born vassal, have been spending my time in toying with you. How can I ever again wear two swords before the face of men? Let me go; let me go."

The girl, however, continued to cling to him, exclaiming:—"If only for a moment, listen to me. You must listen to me. What you say is quite true; but whose doing is it that your honor as a clansman is tainted? Is it not mine, mine? 'Tis for me then, not for you, to die. If you should die now on

* A portion of a Buddhist prayer, commonly used in former days as an exclamation.

this spot how will any one know your motives? And not knowing your motives how will any one be able to praise your deed as that of a true clansman."

"Oh! Kampei," the girl continued, "be guided by me; come with me for a time at least to my village where my father and mother are still living. They will do everything they can for you. Kampei, let our common misery plead for me; let your affianced wife's words persuade you"—bursting with a loud sob into a flood of tears as she spoke her last words.

*Kampei* (irresolutely):—"That might be well enough, but you don't know everything yet, having but lately entered our household. Our master's chief councillor, Ohoboshi Yuranoske, is away at our lord's estates in the provinces. I must wait for his return, and will then implore pardon from him for my disloyal negligence. Come, Okaru, let us away from this place without delay."

They were on the point of departing, when Sagisaka, the Bannai, suddenly made his appearance, followed by several armed men.

*Bannai.*—"Yeh! Kampei, your master has been employing himself in heaping insults upon Moronawo, His Highness' Prime Councillor, and has actually dared to strike him and inflict a deep wound upon him within the court precincts; for which offence, strictly forbidden, as you know, he has been confined to his house, and no doubt ere long his head will be made to fly from his shoulders."

"Ho, there!" continued the Bannai in a loud voice, turning suddenly to his attendants, "seize this fellow, bind him and prepare to hew the scoundrel in pieces."

*Kampei.*—"Yeh! nothing could be more opportune. Come, Sir Stork,* you are not equal to gobbling me up without assistance, it seems; but here is my arm, thin as an onion stalk. Come and try what it tastes like, all of you."

*Bannai.*—"Silence! Upon him, men."

*Kampei* (scornfully):—"At your service, gentlemen."

* Alluding to the beginning of the Bannai's name, Sagisaka; "Sagi" meaning Stork.

The Bannai's attendants, four in number, rushed upon the follower of Yenya, and attempted to seize him. Kampei, however, eluded their onset, and grasping a couple of his assailants by the arm, twisted them suddenly round and hurled them to a distance. The other two attacked him with their swords. The blow of the one he parried with his scabbard, while he spun the other's weapon out of his hand. The four recovering themselves, made a simultaneous onslaught: but Kampei struck them down right and left, and trampled upon them as they lay upon the ground flat as pancakes. Daunted by his prowess, his assailants did not attempt to renew the fight, but made away in panic-struck confusion. The Bannai, beside himself with rage, then flew at Kampei; but the latter seized him by the neck and hurled him to the earth with such violence that he turned head over heels as he fell. Kampei, placing his foot on his prostrate enemy's neck, exclaimed:

"Sah! you may choose your death. Do you prefer being stabbed to death or being hewn in pieces?"—raising his weapon as he spoke.

Okaru, however, ran up to the victor and laid her hand upon his arm. "Hold!" she cried. "To kill the wretch may destroy your chance of pardon. The fellow has had sufficient."

The Bannai, meanwhile, had wriggled from under his enemy's foot and made off as hard as he could, crestfallen enough, and in mortal fear for his life.

*Kampei.*—Yeh! it is a pity, the rascal should get away, too. The scoundrel well deserves to be killed by inches for his cowardly trick. Well, we must now away and hide ourselves, and watch for an opportunity of procuring pardon."

The sixth hour had now struck, and the low clouds on the eastern horizon were whitening with the dawn, while the crows* were leaving their perches filling the air with their sweet sad song as they flew by the lovers, who pursued their hurried flight with hearts heavy with grief as they thought upon the cruel fate which had befallen their lord.

* The Japanese, strangely enough as it appears to us, detect in the hoarse tones of the crow notes of love.

## BOOK THE FOURTH.

### The Seppuku of Yenya Hang'wan.

IN accordance with the sentence of seclusion pronounced against Yenya Hang'wan that nobleman was strictly confined in the Castle of Ogigayatsu, and all egress rigidly prohibited. While things were thus, the ladies of the household in the inner apartments passed the time in all manner of elegant diversions. One day, shortly after the event mentioned in the third Book, young Rikiya was in attendance upon the Lady Kawoyo and in the hope of cheering his lord had brought to the Castle a basketful of rare eight and nine-fold wild-cherry blossoms, gathered upon the hills around Kamakura; himself more pleasing for the eyes to dwell upon than the flowers themselves.

Under the shadow of the willow trees that grew by the verandah near the inner apartments, Hara Goyemon, the chief of the retainers, came walking along the raised floor followed by Ono Kudaiu.

*Goyemon*, (addressing Rikiya as he approached the apartment where the Lady Kawoyo was sitting):—"Ho there, young sir, you are early in your attendance."

*Rikiya.*—It is my duty, as you know, sir, to be at hand day and night, until my father returns from the provinces."

*Goyemon.*—"It is so, pray pardon me." And prostrating himself, Goyemon thus addressed the Lady Kawoyo:

"We venture to inquire after our lord's health."

*Kawoyo.*—"I thank you heartily, gentlemen. Of late my lord has looked far from well, and I am in sad trouble lest some illness should declare itself. Night and morning he keeps his eyes fixed upon yonder mound, now brilliant with flowers: and seems to take so much pleasure in the contemplation of their bright hues that I have caused rare cherry blossoms to be sought out, and have had them arranged as you see in hope of affording him some distraction."

*Goyemon.*—"Ah! lady, I understand your thought. As the flowers open out so will the gates be thrown open; and the order of confinement will be rescinded by His Highness. It is a happy device. Would that your servant Goyemon too, were a less clumsy fellow, and could hit upon some mode of alleviating our lord's distress. However, lady, I would ask your attention for a moment. I have something of importance to communicate to you. People say that imperial commissioners are to come here to-day; and I do not doubt but that their orders are to set our lord at liberty. What do you think, Kudaiu?" (turning suddenly to his companion).

*Kudaiu.*—"Well, if you ask my opinion, Goyemon, why—do you see those blossoms there? they are pleasant enough to look upon just now: but let a puff of wind come, and their beauty is all blown away in a moment. So too with your words. They are pleasing enough to hear; but think you it is fitting that you, a samurai, should utter such honied phrases: as devoid of meaning, if stripped of their show, as mere New Year's compliments? You know what I mean. You know the gravity of our lord's offence; honored by His Highness with a post at Court, in connection with the festivities at Tsuruga-oka, yet daring to lift his hand against the Prime Councillor! Within the palace precincts, too! The least punishment for such a crime is transportation, or more probably, an order of

self-dispatch. Nothing but misfortnne can be expected to result from opposition to the Lord Moronawo."

*Goyemon.*—"Cease, cease; you talk of transportation and self-dispatch as if you rather desired our lord should be so punished * * * * *"

*Kudaiu* (hastily):—"Not so! iya! I desire nothing of the kind. But I am a man of plain speech and speak the plain truth. And let me tell you, Goyemon, that all this trouble is caused by your own parsimony. If you had plastered Moronawo's face with gold, things would never have come to this pass."

*Goyemon*, regarding his companion's face, the cringing expression of which matched well with the meanness of his heart, with withering contempt, replied:—"No samurai, no one wearing the two swords of a gentleman could condescend so to grovel before any one. Rikiya will bear me out in what I say."

Desirous of keeping matters smooth, Kawoyo interfered:

"Pray let there be no quarrelling, gentlemen. It is I, in truth, who am the unfortunate cause of my husband's distress; and I only. Some few days ago, at the inauguration of the Shrine at Tsuruga-oka, Moronawo, who is an unmannerly fellow, dared to speak to me, a wedded wife, of unlawful love. Pestered by his importunity, but desirous that my husband should know nothing of the matter, I endeavored to bring Moronawo to a sense of the shamefulness of his conduct and the inutility of his persecution, by a few lines from a well-known song which I sent to him. Enraged by my refusal, he wreaked his vengeance upon my husband by covering him with insults. And my husband, who is of a hasty temper, at last lost command of himself, and so committed the offence for which he is now confined."

The cause of their lord's anger was now plain to Goyemon and Rikiya, and their faces betrayed their

concern. At this juncture the sound of voices was heard proceeding from the parlor by the entrance porch, and announcing the arrival of the Imperial Commissioners who were demanding to be at once conducted to the inner apartments. The Lady Kawoyo upon this rose from her seat, and with Goyemon and Rikiya advanced to meet the Commissioners, who presented themselves the next moment. The Commissioners—there were two of them—were an esquire of Moronawo's named Ishido Umanojô, and a samurai called Yakushiji Jirozayemon. As they were on duty they did not return the salutations offered them, but seated themselves at once at the upper end of the apartment. Hardly had they done so when a partition was moved back, and Yenya Hang'wan entered the room with dignified composure.

*Yenya.*—Ha! Ishido dono, you come officially? I am ashamed of being the cause of so much trouble to you. Ho, there! offer saké to the gentlemen. There can be no harm in a draught to chase away bad spirits; and the purport of your visit can meanwhile be explained to me."

*Yakushiji.*—"A good thought, a good thought: I will join you. But," he continued with a sneer, "if you knew what the purport of our visit is, I think the saké would stick in your throat."

*Ishido.*—"We are ordered to make an official communication to you, to which we demand your attention."

So saying the Commissioner drew a paper from his breast, and unfolded it, while Hang'wan arranged himself on his mat and assumed an attitude of respectful attention. Ishido then read out the paper, which was to the following effect:—"Lately Yenya Hang'wan Takasada, following the promptings of private malice, drew his weapon on the Prime Councillor the Lord Moronawo, and created a tumult within the precincts of the palace; on account of which crime his estates are hereby ordered to be confiscated and himself decreed to commit self-dispatch."

As the Commissioner concluded, the Lady Kawoyo and the assembled retainers were filled with

sudden terror, regarding each other with trembling amazement. Hang'wan, however, remained unmoved. Without changing a muscle of his countenance he exclaimed quite calmly, "I understand perfectly. But now, gentlemen, will you not take some refreshment, one draught of saké after your labors?"

*Yakushiji.*—"How now, Hang'wan? Silence! Your crime merits decapitation like a common criminal; but His Highness, in his clemency permits you to expiate it by self-dispatch, for which you ought to be grateful, I think. Let the usual preparations for self-dispatch be made without delay. But what means this? You are still wearing your usual long upper-dress trailing behind you. Are you drunk? or have you had a stroke. This conduct is an insult to the Commissioner Ishido and to myself."

And the monster chuckled gleefully as he concluded his insolent speech.

*Yenya.*—"I am not drunk, neither have I had a stroke. As soon as I heard that an imperial communication was to be made to me, I knew what the end would be; and so I have caused everything to be prepared beforehand."

Throwing off his upper-dress, and casting away both of his swords as he spoke, Yenya revealed himself attired in short-sleeved white garments with a *kamishimo* bare of device, and completely prepared for death. A thrill of horror ran through all that were present, and even Yakushiji was unable to utter a word, silenced by the angry expression of his colleague, who approaching the condemned man, exclaimed gently "I can well understand your feelings, sir. My duty I must fulfil; but I pray you to consider me as neither harsh nor impatient."

*Yenya.*—"I am deeply grateful for your kindness. Ever since my attack on Moronawo I knew this would be the result, and have therefore made ready beforehand. Through the intervention of Kakogawo Honzo, Moronawo, to my bitter disappointment, escaped me at the palace; and an inex-

tinguishable rage filled me to the very marrow of my bones. Like Kusunoki Masashige of Minatogawa—who, in his agony, still possessed with an intense longing for vengeance upon his enemy, swore that he would come to life again to have it—I, too, living or dead, will have my revenge upon Moronawo."

A passionate emphasis marked the latter words; while, as they were being spoken, a crowd of retainers who were in the adjoining apartments, began to knock confusedly against the partition, and clamored for permission to look once more upon their lord's face while in life, begging Goyemon to obtain that favor for them. Goyemon, accordingly asked the condemned nobleman to allow the retainers to enter.

*Yenya.*—"What is this? Yet their request is proper enough! But they must wait until Yuranoske returns."

Goyemon bowed assent, and addressing himself to the applicants, exclaimed:—"You have heard our lord's will. You cannot enter yet; not one of you."

They did not utter a word in reply, and complete silence reigned in the apartment in which they still remained assembled. Rikiya, meanwhile, at a sign from Yenya, had placed the sword with which the self-dispatch was to be accomplished, and which had been previously got ready, before his lord; and after composedly drawing back the shoulder-folds of the *kamishimo*, assisted the unfortunate nobleman to arrange himself suitably.

*Yenya* (addressing the two Commissioners):—"And now, sirs, I call upon you to be witnesses to my obedience."

He drew a three cornered stand towards himself as he spoke, and taking up the short sword that lay upon it, lifted it respectfully to his forehead.

*Yenya.*—"Rikiya, Rikiya."

*Rikiya.*—"My lord."

*Yenya.*—"Yuranoske?"

*Rikiya.*—"Is not yet returned, your lordship."

*Yenya.*—"Alas! and yet I wished so much to see him once more in life. My lot is indeed hard, and now nought is left for me but to die."

As he uttered the last words the unfortunate victim of Moronawo's wickedness grasped the sword, point downwards, in his bow-hand, and with one movement ripped himself open.

The Lady Kawoyo closed her eyes with horror and anguish; and with the tears streaming down her cheeks, muttered to herself a Buddhist prayer for the dying.

Suddenly a panel of the partition that separated the apartment where this scene was being enacted from the outer corridor was pushed violently back, and Ohoboshi Yuranoske burst into the room, followed closely by Senzaki Yazama and a crowd of retainers. As soon as he saw his lord's plight he prostrated himself reverentially.

*Yenya.*—"Hah, Yuranoske!—you see I could not longer delay."

*Yuranoske.*—"At least I am thankful that I am in time once more to look upon my lord's face in life."

*Yenya.*—"And I too am glad to see you Yuranoske, ere I die. You know all, doubtless. 'Tis a pitiful story enough of unsatisfied vengeance."

*Yuranoske.*—"Ay, my lord, I know all. But this is not the time to dwell upon the details of what has happened. My only prayer now is, that my lord's death may be such as befits a brave samurai."

*Yenya.*—"Do not fear for that!" and seizing the sword with both hands, he widened the gash he had already inflicted upon himself. Gasping for breath he continued to speak with difficulty:—"Yuranoske—this sword—my dying gift to you—you will exact vengeance." And throwing away the blood-stained weapon with a last effort, Yenya Hang'wan Takasada rolled over on his face—dead

The Lady Kawoyo and the retainers present started back in affright, closing their eyes horror-struck at the terrible sight; while their sobs and the grinding of their teeth showed the grief and rage that were in their hearts.

Yuranoske meanwhile dragged himself close to the corpse and grasping the fatal weapon lifted it reverently to his forehead. Fixing his eyes earnestly on the blood-stained point, he clenched his fist convulsively; while in a flood of tears he gave vent to the sorrow and passion that consumed him.

The misery of his lord's agony had penetrated to the inmost depths of his retainer's heart: and it was at this moment that there arose in Yuranoske's breast those sentiments of unswerving devotedness and loyalty to his dead chief's memory, that have made the name of Ohoboshi famous forever.

Yakushiji springing suddenly to his feet exclaimed:

"Now, my masters, Hang'wan is dead and done for. You can take yourselves off. Away with you."

*Ishido.*—"You are too hasty, Yakushiji. Yenya Hang'wan was a lord of province and castle; and proper arrangements must be made for the funeral rites. Therefore" (turning to the crowd of retainers), "pray understand that there is no intention of driving you hurriedly away from the castle. I will myself draw up a brief report showing that I have in the execution of my duty witnessed the self-dispatch of your master. And now, Sir Yuranoske," addressing himself to the karo, "I fully understand your distress. If I can render you any service pray do not forget to avail yourself of my assistance."

As he concluded, the Commissioner courteously saluted the retainers of Yenya, and composedly took his departure.

*Yakushiji.*—"For my part I want this dead body removed at any rate. Meanwhile I will snatch some repose within yonder. Ho! Some of you, there, throw all this household rubbish out of doors.

There is nothing here but what was Hang'wan's property. And as to you" turning round with an angry look, "away with you and turn into ronin as fast as you please." With these words he strode out of the apartment. As soon as he had gone the Lady Kawoyo suddenly lifted up her voice and exclaimed in a piteous tone:

"Alas! alas! my friends, was ever condition more distressful than yours? Oh! that I had said all that I wanted to say to my lord in his agony! But I did not know what I ought to do. I was afraid of exciting the contempt of the Commissioners; and so I have forborne from speaking until now. I cannot tell you how miserable I am." And falling upon the corpse, her grief overwhelmed her, and she burst into a flood of tears.

*Yuranoske* now called to his son—"Rikiya, you will accompany our mistress, and at once convey the body of our dead master to the family burying place at the Temple of Komyo. I shall follow close after you, and charge myself with the ordering of the funeral ceremonies. Hori, Yazama, Odera, Hasama and the rest of the retainers will go with you as escort."

A norimon was immediately brought forward, and the body carefully lifted and placed within, amid the tears of all present. The Lady Kawoyo, beside herself with grief, struggled hard to keep back her tears, as she mingled with the retainers, who, one by one, took up their places around the norimon, and raising it on the shoulders of a number among them, rapidly carried away their burden to the family burying place. Kudaiu was one of those who remained behind. Seating himself, and addressing himself to Yuranoske he exclaimed:

"Well, Ohoboshi, the office of Karo has been hereditary in your family ever since the days of your ancestor Hachiman Rokuro. And I, too, have been accorded a place at the right hand of him whom they are bearing off yonder. But now we are all about to become ronin; and as we have to find food for our wives and children, why should we not lay hands upon the treasure amassed by our lord, divide

it among ourselves, and leave the castle without further delay? For Yakushiji is sure to be offended if we stop here much longer."

*Senzaki*, emphatically:—"I think quite differently from Kudaiu. It seems to me that as long as our enemy, the lord Moronawo, lives, vengeance is our care. Let us wait here until he comes to dislodge us; and die, if necessary, upon our own ground."

*Sadakuro.*—"I say, No. The notion of dying upon our own ground is a silly one. I am of the same opinion as my father, let us ransack the place, divide what we find, and then get away. This would be really sensible conduct."

*Yuranoske* quietly intervened:—"I am quite of Yagoro's opinion. We ought, according to old custom, to slay ourselves for the sake of our dead lord. But instead of a cruel self-dispatch, would it not be better to await the force which Ashikaga may send against us, and die in resisting it with our utmost determination."

*Kudaiu.*—"Yah! what say you there? Is that your sage counsel? What, we miserable rônin to puff ourselves up with the notion of drawing bow against Ashikaga! A silly proceeding enough that would be and one in which Kudaiu, at all events, will have no part."

*Sadakuro.*—"You are right, father, you are right. What these gentlemen propose is to me unintelligible. However, what need to prolong this discussion? It is waste of time to remain here. Let us away, father."

*Kudaiu.*—"We will, we will. And you, gentlemen, remain here if you choose! It won't be for long;" he added derisively. Kudaiu and his son then took their departure together.

*Senzaki.*—"Pah! What a covetous wretch that Ono is! The pair were anxious to beat a retreat the moment they heard us talk of resistance. Cowards! But we need not concern ourselves with them, let us prepare ourselves to meet the attack."

*Yuranoske.*—"Ah! not so fast, Yagoro. What have we against Ashikaga that we should draw bow against him? What I said just now was only to find out the real sentiment of the precious pair who have just left us. Let Yakushiji deliver up the castle, and bitter though it be to leave this place, let us make our way to Yamashina, near Miyako; there I will unfold to you my designs, and we can then arrange upon some plan of carrying them out." The last words were hardly out of his mouth, when Yakushiji suddenly made his appearance.

"Ho, there! your conference seems long enough. If the body has been removed, what do you linger here for? Leave the castle at once without further delay."

Hara Goyemon, annoyed at the sharp and insolent tone which Yakushiji adopted, replied angrily:

"Hah! your lordship cannot wait, it would seem? Well, there are our dead lord's arms, armor and horse gear. Take a good look at them and seize them all. Seize everything he had. Come, Sir Yuranoske, let us withdraw."

Yuranoske signified his assent; and rising to their feet, their hearts heavy with the thought that they were quitting forever the castle where for generations their ancestors, and where they themselves for so long a time, had night and day done their duty as samurai, the retainers of Yenya slowly and reluctantly, and with many a wistful look back, passed out through the castle-gate. Hardly had they turned their faces from their old home when they found themselves confronted by Rikiya, Yazama, Odera and Hori, who, after escorting their lord's body to the temple of Komyo, had hastened back to the castle.

"Ah!"—exclaimed the latter simultaneously, impetuously arresting as they spoke the further progress of Yuranoske and his companions, "has the castle then been taken possession of? We thought to make our last stand here against the force that Ashikaga might send to dislodge us."

*Yuranoske.*—"Not so, not so. We will not die here. Look, comrades;" displaying the short

sword which Yenya Hang'wan had made him a dying gift of. "With this weapon our dead lord let out his life-blood, with this weapon he gave escape to his indignant spirit, and with this weapon will I take the head of Moronawo, and thus fulfil the last command of our lord."

"So be it! so be it!" they all exclaimed in a loud voice.

Yakushiji from within the gate heard the gallant cry; and noisily putting up the bars, shouted out derisively:

"Your lord's crime against Moronawo has met with its proper reward. Your master's servants are fortunate—most fortunate. Ha! ha!"

His satellites backed up the fellow's sneer by loud laughs, which so enraged some of the younger samurai of Yuranoske's party, that they would have retraced their steps, if their leader had not prevented them by reminding them of the necessity of sacrificing everything to the accomplishment of vengeance upon Moronawo. Still they could not help often glancing back with angry looks upon the castle they were leaving in the possession of Yakushiji and his crew.

End of Book IV.

## BOOK THE FIFTH.

### The Night Adventure of Kampei.

MINUTELY following the example of the noble falcon that even at death's door refuses to rob the farmer of a single ear of grain,* Hayano Kampei day after day and night after night dwelt in solitary wretchedness and repentance over his youthful error in the neighborhood of the hill-village of Yamazaki, gaining his livelihood by tracking the monkey and the wild boar along the narrow mountain-paths—narrow as were his means of existence.†

One night a tempest overtook him while out among the hills, and he took refuge under a pine-tree, holding his match-lock in readiness and waiting for the rain that was pouring down in bucketfuls from the lowering sky, like a July storm, to cease. He had hardly gained shelter when he saw the glimmer of a small lantern approaching through the darkness. The lantern was bent like a bow* by the

* A proverbial saying—the falcon is held to be the most generous of birds.

† Such is the sense of a play upon words occurring here in the original text, and incapable of anything like a literal rendering.

* The lantern was one of a long cylindrical form.

violence of the wind, and the man who carried it, and who rapidly neared the spot where the hunter was standing, endeavored to protect the light from the wind and rain by screening it under his cloak.

*Kampei.*—"Iya, I say. Pardon me for stopping you, but will you be good enough to give me a light." With these words Kampei approached the traveller, who, as soon as he saw him, started back and laid his hand upon his sword, exclaiming:—"You seem to know well enough the danger of travelling alone along this road, to judge by your being armed. You have very much the appearance, my friend, of a highwayman with your match-lock there. You won't get a light from me; inquire somewhere else."

And suddenly turning towards his questioner, the traveller scanned him narrowly.

*Kampei.*—"What! You take me for a robber, your eyes deceive you, but I can excuse your mistake. I am a hunter of the neighborhood, and the rain has so damped my tinder that I can make no use of it. You can understand my plight. See, I will give the gun into your own hands, while you can light the tinder for me yourself."

The hunter spoke honestly enough, and the traveller once more regarded him attentively. After a slight pause he exclaimed suddenly:

"Why, you are Kampei, Hayano Kampei, are you not?"

*Kampei.*—"I am; and you? You must be Senzaki Yagoro."

The pair thereupon interchanged salutations, and clenched their fists hard as the undying hate again stirred their hearts that the ruin of their lord's house had awakened in them, when they were last—it already seemed ages ago—in each other's company. Kampei, letting his head fall mournfully on his breast, could not for some time utter a word. At last he found speech, exclaiming:

"Yeh! I am so stricken with shame—my honor as a Bushi is so entirely gone—that I hardly dare show my face even to so old a comrade as yourself. I ought to have been at my lord's side when the

event that resulted so cruelly for our master's house took place; but my ill-fortune was such that I was not where my duty called me, and my disloyalty made it impossible for me to return to the castle. While waiting for a favorable moment for expressing my repentance, I was overwhelmed by the news of our master's self-dispatch. Namusambo! that fellow Moronawo is the cause of all this; and thinking that the least I could do was to accompany my lord on the dark path, I laid hand upon my sword when I was arrested by the reflection that my lord would ask me what high deed I had done to entitle me to follow him, and that I could do nothing but hang my head with shame in reply. Heartbroken I gave up the idea of self-dispatch, and tried to find out what was being done. At last, I heard that it was intended to avenge the death of our master, the design originating with the Ohoboshis, father and son, and Sir Goyemon. I have never been formally expelled from the clan, and if means could be found to procure me an interview with Yuranosko and I should be permitted to add my name to the list of conspirators, I should never fear to face the world as long as I lived and my name would remain bright for ages after my death. In our chance meeting to-day I am as fortunate as if I were to come upon the Udonge* in bloom. I adjure you as an old comrade, as a fellow-samurai, give me your aid and help me to regain the honorable position I have lost." So saying Kampei clasped his hand in entreaty, full of remorse for his disloyalty, and burst into not unmanly tears. Of a truth it was a pitiable state of things. Yagoro felt that his old friend's repentance was sincere, but considered himself obliged, cruel though it seemed, not to reveal the whole plot, seeing how important a matter it was.

"Come, come, Kampei," he said after a pause, "you are speaking at random. Your talk about a list of conspirators is all moon-shine; as far as I know no one has dreamt of any such plot as you refer to. I am on my way from Yuranoske to Goyemon with a message about erecting a monument over our lord's grave. But we are all mere ronin now, and although we wish to put up a monument that

* Udonge—Vide appendix.

will last forever, so that his memory may not be lost, we are obliged to try and collect the money necessary for the purpose among those who do not forget the benefits they have received from our dead master; whose disposition, however, we ascertain before we unfold our scheme to them. You, of course, are among those who keep a grateful memory of our lord."

The story about the monument was a fiction; Yagoro, who was moved by his friend's distress, meant to hint what Yuranoske's real design was.

*Kampei.*—"Many thanks, Yagoro; and so your present business is to get funds for a monument. I understand you perfectly. I shall move heaven and earth to procure money somewhere for the purpose of joining in the subscription. Yagoro, what a shameful position I am in! fit punishment for my disloyalty to our master. There is not a single soul to whom I can apply for assistance. However, my father-in-law, Yoichibei, is a good-natured old man, a farmer of these parts; my wife is as much grieved as I am at the remembrance of my fault, and the old people are full of a compassionate desire to see me restored to my former rank by some means or other. I shall tell them of my fortunate meeting with you to-night; and, if I let them know of this chance of regaining my position, they will, for the sake of their daughter, sell some of their land. I know they will not refuse to do so, and I would beg of you to convey the money for me to Goyemon."

Yagoro could not resist Kampei's pleading tone, and replied, "Well, I will tell Goyemon all that you have said, and will see what can be done by petitioning Yuranoske on your behalf. The day after to-morrow you shall hear from me without fail. And here, by-the-by, is Goyemon's itinerary;" handing over a paper, as he spoke, to Kampei, who lifted it respectfully to his forehead.

*Kampei.*—"A thousand, thousand thanks; no danger of my being behindhand with the money. The day after to-morrow I hope to see you. If you should want to look me up you must go to the ferry at Yamazaki; turn to the left, and then inquire for the house of one Yoichibei, you will have no

difficulty in finding it. And now as it is far on in the night, I think you had better continue your journey. Remember that the road you will have to travel over is somewhat dangerous, and therefore do not cease to be on your guard."

*Yagoro.*—"Good, I understand; until the monument to our dead lord has been erected, no flea shall taste this body of mine, and I don't doubt in the least that all the money necessary will be obtained. Fare you well, sir; fare you well."

Kampei and Yagoro then turned their backs upon each other and strode away rapidly in opposite directions. The rain again fell in torrents. The clatter of footsteps along the path, which the pitch darkness rendered almost undistinguishable, announced the approach of some wayfarer; and presently Yoichibei, impelled by his love for his daughter, to brave the perils of a night journey, might have been discerned tottering onward through the darkness leaning on a staff: true, brave-hearted father! not more bewildered by the mirkness of the night than by your own gloomy thoughts. As the old man struggled forward through the storm his mournful reverie was suddenly interrupted by some one behind him shouting, "Oi, Oi, old gentleman, let's travel together."

The shouting came from no other than the son of Kudaiu, Sadakuro, whose home was no more fixed than the white crest of a wave. The fellow had betaken himself to night work along this road and wore a heavy sword hanging from his hip.

*Sadakuro.*—"How, old fellow, art deaf? I've been shouting after you for some time. Rather hard luck, isn't it? An old chap like you alone, at night, upon a dangerous road like this. Come, I'll keep you company." The look of insolent familiarity with which he accompanied these words caused the old man some apprehension; but age had given him craft, and he answered as cheerfully as he could. "Well, well; you don't look young, so I suppose I need not fear you.* True! indeed, this is

* For the young, so think the Japanese, not without justice, are commonly more cruel and violent than the old.

hard upon an old man like me to be out on such a night and all alone; but there is no help for it. Money, you know, is what people are always in want of, everywhere; and as I am behind with my taxes, I have been round among my relations to ask assistance—never a pleasant task,—but without getting a cash from one of them; and so, as none of them seemed inclined to help me over my difficulties, I did not trouble them with a long visit, but started homewards there and then.

Sadakuro broke in rudely:—"Yai! don't try to fool me with your nonsense about being behind with your taxes. Just listen to what I've got to say to you. That bag in your bosom there, to judge by its bulk, must contain some forty or fifty riyo. I caught sight of it just now, a striped bag,—hand it over. What! must I ask for it with folded hands? Out with it, and don't be a fool. Of course, you will howl about its being wanted for your family. I care nothing about that; you can't help yourself, that's clear, so let me have it if you please, and at once."

And with a sudden movement he snatched the bag out of the old man's bosom.

*Yoichibei.*—"Ah! Sir, I implore you, that bag ———"

*Sadakuro.*—"That bag, that bag ——— Well, it seems I was right as to its contents."

And the robber grasped the bag more firmly as he spoke.

*Yoichibei.*—"No, no; it only contains some cash left after buying a pair of straw shoes at the last village, together with the remains of some rice balls I had for my dinner, and some emollient physic and stimulant lozenges my daughter gave me before leaving home, to use in case of an attack of flux. Pray let me have it back."

And with a quick movement the old man repossessed himself of the bag and made off with it. Sadakuro, however, soon overtook him.

"Yê! you will be a fool then. I don't want to hew you in pieces, but gentle means, it seems, only make you stiffen your back. Hand that to me without more ado, or I'll have at you."

So saying he drew his long sword and raised it high above his head, and alas! ere one had time to cry mercy he aimed a blow at the old man, sweeping down with his sword as if it was only a bamboo he was splitting.* But Yoichibei arrested the whirl of sword and arm, and seizing the naked blade with both hands in a firm grasp, cried:

"Nay, surely you would not kill me!"

*Sadakuro.*—"Ah! I knew I was right. I felt sure you had money about you. It is your money kills you. Come, no more nonsense, but die and make no noise about it."

And the robber pressed the old man with the point of his sword as he spoke.

*Yoichibei.*—"Mâ, mâ! I pray you a little patience. Alas! is there no escape for me; true, ay true! I have money on me, but this money belongs to my only daughter. She has a lover dearer to her than life itself, and the money is for him. For certain reasons, he became a ronin. My daughter told me that he had become a ronin through her fault, and begged us—her mother and me—that she might be allowed to help him to get back his lost rank. Night after night she begged this. But we are very poor bodies, and could hit upon no plan of bringing about what she wanted. At last, however, her mother and I, after talking over the matter, agreed upon a means of aiding her, and got her to consent to it. We took good care, however, that her lover should know nothing of our design, and told her to be careful to say nothing about it to him. Oh, this money has cost tears of blood to us—my only daughter, her mother, and myself. What shall we do if you take it from us? O! Sir, I ask you with clasped hands to be merciful to us. You, too, sir, look like one who has been a samurai and will sympathize with us. Without this money my daughter and her lover will never be able to hold up their heads again. He is affianced to my only daughter; how pitiable, how cruel to separate them. O! Sir, consider their

* The bamboo splitter having made a preliminary slit, draws the knife quickly through the bamboo, or sometimes pulls the latter over the blade with great rapidity.

hard case. I beg of yon to afford us yonr merciful help. Yê, yê, you are young yet, sir, you have no children. By-and-by you will have children, and then you will understand why I plead with you so earnestly. You cannot but assist us in our miserable lot. My home is but one league further on, let only the money be given to my daughter's lover, and I will let you kill me. Let me but see my daughter's face happy, and I will gladly die. Speak to me, sir! Speak to me, sir!"

But loud as the old man's entreaties were, they aroused no compassion, and the far off echoes of the hills alone responded to his cries.

*Sadakuro.*—"'O, pitiable, cruel,' what stuff you talk; your doing a kindness to me will not harm your son, nothing evil can come out of doing a kindness."

"Have mercy on me," groaned the victim as, pierced by Sadakuro's sword, he fell down and rolled in his death agony on the ground. The murderer, kicking the body aside, exclaimed coolly, "Pitiable piece of work. Well, I am sorry for it, I didn't do it out of any malice; but, you see, you had money. That killed you. No money and you'd be alive now. Your money was your enemy. I can't help pitying you, too. Which road will you take, Namu-amida butsu or Namu miyoho renge kiyo?* Choose one and let all end." And he buried his sword a second time in the still quivering form. The blades of grass were red with dewlike drops of blood, and the feeble breath passed away from the old man full of years and misery. His murderer immediately possessed himself of the bag of money and tried to estimate its contents in the dark by feeling it with his hand.

"Capital," he cried, after a pause; "fifty riyo here; it's a long time since such a sum and I have been face to face. I am much obliged to you." Casting a glance towards his victim he then hung the bag round his own neck and threw the corpse to the bottom of a neighboring ravine, little thinking of the retribution that was awaiting him.

* See appendix.

He had hardly proceeded on his way when a wounded boar came dashing up behind him. He stood aside to let the animal pass, who rushed straight on, heedless of roots and stones. At the moment Sadakuro stood back out of the animal's way, just as the boar was flying past him through the mud and bushes, he was struck by a double shot which passed from his backbone through the side of his chest, and rolled over dead before he could ever utter a groan. One cannot be sorry the villain came to such an end.

Kampei meanwhile, for it was from him that the fatal shot proceeded, thinking he had hit a boar, came towards the spot, holding his gun muzzle downwards, and searching for the animal's body. Seeing something on the ground, he raised it up, and found to his horror and astonishment that it was a human corpse.

"Yai, yai! Why, I have slain a man. Namusambô!"

It was so dark it was impossible to tell who the man might be, but Kampei put his hand inside the breast to see if his victim's heart still beat. In doing this, his hand came upon the purse of money which seemed, by its feel, to contain some forty or fifty riyo. Overjoyed at his luck he lifted the bag gratefully to his head; and made off more rapidly than the boar that had just rushed past.

End of Book V.

## BOOK THE SIXTH.

### The Heroism of Kampei.

"Come ye old folks hand in hand;
Come and watch our joyous band.
Merrier is the harvest dance
'Neath our old folks' kindly glance." *

SUCH was the country snatch the corn-threshers greeted the morrow's dawn with at the village of Yamazaki, † which, as you will guess from the name, lay in the shadow of the hills. Here stood the humble cabin of Yoichibei, who tilled some few rods of land around, and it was here that Kampei had retired after his disgrace, with his affianced Okaru, who, awake betimes this morning, was listening to the song as she combed out the traces of the night's disorder from her hair, ‡ and wondered why Kampei did not return. Her anxiety about him made it a difficult matter for the

* There is here in the text an untranslatable play upon words.

† Lit. "fronting the hills."

‡ Women in Japan do not unbind their hair when retiring to rest. The singular—and to Europeans most uncomfortable—pillows they use permit of a complicated arrangement of the sleeper's hair remaining undisturbed until the morning.

girl to arrange her tresses after the manner of young married ladies with teeth yet unblacked * ; and there was no one to whom she could pour out her grief, or from whom she might look for comfort.† Nevertheless a few minutes use of her boxwood comb restored its beautiful dark gloss to her hair; and she managed, at last, to arrange it in so charming a manner that it was a pity there should be none but country boors to admire it. As she finished her task, her mother, whose infirmities obliged her to use the support of a stick, came hobbling up the path :—" Ah, daughter, so you have finished doing your hair. How prettily you have put it up. Well, the wheat harvest is being gathered in, and you see nothing everywhere but people as busy as they can be. Just now as I passed by the bamboo clump yonder, I heard the young fellows singing as they threshed the corn the old snatch—

'Come ye old folks hand in hand;
Come and watch our joyous band.
Merrier is the harvest dance
'Neath our old folks' kindly glance.'

" Your father is long in returning ; I have been as far as the end of the village to look out for him but without seeing the least sign of him."

*Okaru.*—" I wonder at that, I can't understand it; what can make him so late? Shall I run out and see if he is coming?"

*Mother.*—" Why, no; young women cannot go wandering about all alone. Don't you remember how you hated walking about the village when you were a little girl? Since you have been at service at my lord Yenya's has our grassy common gained some new attraction for you? Ah, daughter," after a pause, " if Kampei were but here your face would soon lose its anxious look."

* As to the custom of blackening the teeth, see Appendix.

† There are here a number of untranslatable puns in the text.

*Okaru.*—"Yes, mother, of course it would. When a girl has her lover with her, however dull and stupid the village may be, all seems joyous to her. And soon we shall be in the Bon month,* and then Kampei and we shall be the "old folks" of the song and go "hand in hand" to see the dancing—shall we not? You know you have been young, too, once, mother."

The girl's tone was lively, but her trembling limbs revealed the anxiety she could not wholly conceal.

*Mother.*—"Nambo; you talk merrily enough, but in your heart, in your heart—"

*Okaru* (eagerly).—"Oh, mother, believe me, I am quite happy. Is it not for my husband's sake that I have engaged myself at the tea-house in the Gion street at Kioto. I am quite ready to go; and it is only the thought that I shall not any longer be able to look after my father's comforts that grieves me. My brother, who, though of mean condition, has been permitted to become a retainer of our lord Yenya, must take my place."

At this juncture, Ichimonjiya Saibei, the master of the tea-house in the Gion street, accompanied by two coolies bearing a kago, came rapidly up to the house, and calling to them to set down their burden at the door, inquired in a loud tone, just as Okaru ceased speaking, if the goodman Yoichibei was at home, and without further ceremony entered the house.

*Mother.*—"Come in, sir; come in. You have had a long journey to be sure. Quick, daughter, bring the gentleman tea and tobacco."

The two women were so anxious to please their guest that they would have covered the walls of their house with beaten gold if they could have done so to gratify him.

*Ichimonjiya.*—"Well mistress, last night I had some business of importance with your husband. Has he got back all right?"

* See Appendix "Bon month."

*Mother.*—"Got back—did you say? Why sir, has he not come back with you, then? What can this mean? Since he went to see you he has—"

*Ichimonjiya.*—"Not come back? Well, that is strange. Perhaps he has been carelessly passing by some shrine of Inari, and been bewitched by some crystal-pawing fox.* However that may be, here am I, come to take away the girl according to agreement. An engagement of five years for one hundred riyos; that was our bargain. Your husband said he had a pressing need of money, and begged me with tears in his eyes to advance him half the price, which at last I consented to do; getting him to write a receipt for it in the agreement. The remainder of the purchase money, it was understood, was to be paid on delivery of the girl. He seemed beside himself with joy when I counted out the fifty riyos to him, and set out on his return there and then, although it was late, and I warned him that it was unwise to travel by night with money about one. He wouldn't listen to me, however, and hurried off. Perhaps he has stopped somewhere in the road."

*Okaru.*—"Is there any place he would stop at, mother?"

*Mother.*—"Stop, indeed! He would be sure to hasten homewards with all speed. He would never rest till he had got home and gladdened us by the sight of the money. I cannot understand his being so long, at all."

*Ichimonjiya.*—"Understand it or not, that is your affair; here is the balance of the purchase money, and now I should like to take the girl with me."

The fellow took fifty riyos from his bosom, as he spoke, and offered them to Okaru's mother, saying: "This makes up the hundred riyos; come take them."

*Mother.*—"But I can't give her up, spite of what you say, until her father shall have returned."

* The fox much dreaded on account of his supposed power over human beings is generally represented as holding a crystal ball in his forepaws.

*Ichimonjiya.*—"But you must, you must, I tell you; you can't get out of it. Look, here is the agreement with Yoichibei's seal upon it. The girl is mine from this day, and for every day of her service I lose, I will make you pay well. Go with me she must and shall."

Seizing Okaru by the hand, he was about to lead her away when her mother interrupted him, catching her daughter by the other hand, and exclaiming, "Nay, nay, a little patience."

Ichimonjiya, however, tried to pull the girl towards him and get her into the kago, but his efforts were resisted by her mother. At this crisis, Kampei, holding his gun under his straw rain-cape, suddenly made his appearance at the door, and, seeing how matters stood, hastened into the house, exclaiming—"What is all this about, Okaru? tell me. What is this kago here for; where are you going in it?"

*Mother.*—"Ah, Kampei! I am so glad you have come. You are not a minute too soon."

Kampei could not understand his mother-in-law's delight. "There is some mystery here. Mother, wife, tell me, what is the meaning of all this?"

Further conversation was interrupted by Ichimonjiya, who strode up the apartment and squatting down, exclaimed angrily:—"O! let there be an end to this. You are my servant's husband, are you?" turning to Kampei. "Husband or not, matters little to me. The agreement provides that no one (husband or other) shall prevent the contract from being carried out. See, Yoichibei's seal is on the paper; is not that enough for you?" Come, old lady," he resumed, speaking to Okaru's mother; "let me have the girl without more ado."

*Mother.*—"Oh! son-in-law, what am I to do? Our daughter told us sometime since you were in great need of money, and implored us to give her some for you; but how could we, poor folk as we are! At last, her father said the only way was to send our daughter for a time to service; but that this must be done without your knowledge, because, of course, you might not like money to be procured

in such a way. In case of need, you know, they say a samurai may rob and steal; and, as it was for her husband's advantage, we thought you would not, after all, be angry. So her father went yesterday to Kioto and settled terms with this gentleman here, the master of the house in the Gion street, and ought to have been back ere this, but has not yet returned, which makes us feel very anxious about him. In the midst of our uncertainty, this gentleman appears and says that he gave half the hiring-money to Yoichibei last night, and has brought the other half with him, which he offers to us in exchange for Okaru. I have asked him to wait until her father returns, but he refuses. What are we to do, Kampei?"

*Kampei.*—"Really my father-in-law is most kind. I have had a windfall, but of that more by-and-by. There can be no doubt, I think, that Okaru cannot be given up until her father shall have returned."

*Ichimonjiya.*—"Why I could buy up all the women in Kioto and Ohozaka; for that matter, indeed, the whole population of Nyogo island,* and it is not likely I should say I had paid half the money down if I had not done so—is it? Besides I can prove that I paid it. When I had counted out the money to the old fellow he wrapped it up in a cloth; which he was about to tie round his neck, when I showed him how dangerous it was to carry money in that way, and lent him a purse made of stuff just like my dress here, both in texture and design. He tied the purse round his neck and started without further delay."

*Kampei.*—"What do you say—a purse made of striped cloth like this of which your dress is made?"

*Ichimonjiya.*—"Yes, yes, that will be proof of the truth of what I say; will it not?"

A terrible thought rose up in Kampei's mind as he heard this, and he furtively but closely examined Ichimonjiya's dress. His scrutiny convinced him that it was exactly of the same material and design as the purse he had taken the previous night and he at once understood that the man whom he

* See appendix.

had accidentally shot was no other than his father-in-law. "Would that I had been shot myself," he thought to himself: "It would have been a less miserable affair than this."

Okaru, impatient at her lover's silence cried peevishly,

"Come Kampei, don't stand there hesitating, but speak out and decide whether I am to go with this man or not."

*Kampei.*—"Ah, well you see—what this man says seems to be true. There appears to be no help for it and you must go with him."

*Okaru.*—"What, before my father returns?"

*Kampei.*—"I forgot to tell you that I saw your father this morning. It is uncertain when he will return."

*Okaru.*—"How, you saw my father this morning! Why did you not tell us then and put an end to our anxiety?"

Ichimonjiya, taking advantage of the pause exclaimed: "They say you may search seven times and still not find your man. However, now we know where the goodman is we need trouble ourselves no more about him. So pray don't let us be at sixes and sevens any more about the girl; or, faith, the whole affair will become a troublesome one enough. Come, cheer up, all three of you; and if ever you, sir, or the old lady should visit Kioto, I hope I shall have the pleasure of a call from you. Now my girl, into the kago with you, up with you, quick."

*Okaru.*—"Ai, ai. O Kampei, must I then go? I leave my father and mother to your care. You will not fail to be kind to them, will you? to my father especially—for he is very infirm." The poor girl of course had not the least notion that her father was no more. Sad and pitiable situation! Kampei was on the verge of confessing everything upon the spot, but the presence of a stranger restrained him: and he was forced to endure his misery in silence.

*Mother.*—"Son-in-law, you and your wife must now take leave of each other; and you, daughter, do not be faint-hearted but try and bear up bravely."

*Okaru.*—"Do not fear, mother. It is for my husband's sake that I am sold into service for a time. I have no cause whatever to be unhappy. You will see that I shall have plenty of courage—it is only going without seeing my father that troubles me."

*Mother.*—"Your father shall come and see you as he returns, I promise you that. Take care of yourself, daughter; apply the moxa occasionally, and bring us back a healthy face. Have you all you want,—nose-paper and fan? You will be uncomfortable without them."

"Be careful," she added, as she assisted the girl to get into the kago, "or you will stumble and hurt yourself. Farewell, farewell."

"What ill-fortune is it," she continued as the kago was borne away, "that hangs over us. My daughter has done nothing to deserve punishment, yet I have to endure the misery of losing her."

The poor woman ground her teeth with pain and burst into tears, while her daughter grasping tightly the sides of her kago managed, but with difficulty, to stifle her sobs and restrain her tears, so that her mother should not know she was weeping.

Ichimonjiya, heartless fellow, told the bearers to hurry on, and the kago moved rapidly away, the poor girl's mother gazing after it wistfully.

*Mother.*—"Ah! we ought not to have done this. How miserable my daughter will be!"

"Son-in-law," added the poor woman, turning to Kampei, "you see I am her mother, yet I have dried up my tears. I pray you do not let your grief overcome you. You spoke just now of my husband's return being uncertain, and said you met him this morning."

*Kampei.*—"Ha, did I?"

*Mother.*—"Yes. Where was it you met him? Where did you part from him?"

*Kampei.*—"Where did I part from him, you say? I think it was at Toba or Fushimi, or perhaps Yodo, or it might have been at Takeda."

The words were hardly out of Kampei's mouth, when a shuffling of feet was heard outside and three hunters of the neighborhood, Meppo Yahachi, Tanegashima no Roku and Tanuki no Kakubei, immediately afterwards thronged the entrance, bearing on their shoulders a door, on which was laid the corpse of Yoichibei decently covered with a straw rain-cape.

"As we came back from hunting among the hills last night," exclaimed one of them, "we found the body of Yoichibei, who has evidently been murdered; and we have brought it here."

Overwhelmed at the sight, the mother of Okaru for a moment could not find speech.

"O, son-in-law," she exclaimed at last, "whose work is this? Who is the villain who has thus slain my husband? Son-in-law, son-in-law, you must not rest until this cruel murder has been amply avenged, amply avenged. O, my husband! my husband!" Her complaints and reproaches were, however, of as little avail as the tears which flowed freely from her eyes. The hunters, shocked at the sight of her misery, exclaimed together, "Dame, Dame, this is a terrible misfortune, truly. But had you not better lay a complaint at once before the magistrate? We cannot tell you how sorry we are for you in your distress." With which words they laid down the door with its burden upon the matting, and took their departure.

The mother of Okaru, restraining her tears for a moment, marched up to Kampei, "Son-in-law," she cried, "I can hardly believe my eyes when I see you stand unmoved by the sight of your murdered father-in-law. What can be the meaning of all this? You say you met my poor husband this morning. Did he not give you some money? Did he say nothing to you? Speak, speak,—what, you have not a word to say? Ah! I understand, this explains everything."

She thrust her hand suddenly as she spoke into Kampei's breast, and dragging out the purse, said,

"I saw you looking at this furtively just now. Ah! there is blood upon it,—it is you, you who have murdered my husband."

"Murdered? That purse is—"

"That purse is what? Ah! you thought your foul deed would remain hidden, but it has come to light in spite of you. You have killed him for the money that was in this purse. What have you done with it? What, silent still? Poor husband! you have been murdered by this fellow, because he thought he would not get the whole of the price for which his wife was sold. Wretch, we had always thought you a man of honor; and all the time you have been a villain,—oh, that I could kill you on the spot; you are a wild beast, not a man. The horror has dried up my tears, and I cannot weep. Alas, my poor husband! you little knew what a brute of a son-in-law it was in whose behalf, anxious as you were to help him to regain his position as a samurai, you, an old man, gave up your rest and travelled by night and on foot to Kioto: gave up your treasure and your only daughter for one who only sought to harm you in return for the good you were doing for him; like a dog that bites the hand that feeds him. To murder one's benefactor! Is it possible to conceive such baseness and cruelty? None but a devil could be such a monster. Give me back my husband I tell you,—bring him back to life!"

Blind with rage and grief, the poor woman threw herself upon Kampei, and seizing him by his cue dragged him towards her, buffeting him the while with all her might.

"Wretch," she continued, "if only I had the strength I would hack you in pieces, though even that would not glut my vengeance."

She went on loading him with reproaches, until at last exhausted with grief and passion, she fell down in a faint; while Kampei, in an agony of remorse that made the sweat stand out upon his body, threw himself upon the ground, gnawing the matting in his dread that the judgment of heaven had overtaken him.

Meanwhile, two samurai, wearing deep-brimmed bamboo hats that concealed their features, knocked at the entrance.

"Is Hayano Kampei living here? Hara Goyemon and Senzaki Yagoro desire an interview with him."

Inopportune as the visit of the two samurai was, Kampei, nevertheless, rose to his feet and tightening his belt snatched up his side-arms and thrust them hurriedly into their place.

He then went to receive his visitors, exclaiming: "Well, well, gentlemen, who could have expected the honor of a call from you at this poor hut? I am sure I do not know how to thank you sufficiently;" bowing his head low as he spoke.

*Goyemon.*—"But perhaps we are interrupting you in some family engagement, you seem occupied."

*Kampei.*—Oh, nothing of any importance, some small private matter of no moment, I assure you. Pray do not trouble yourselves on that point, but do me the honor to enter."

"In that case," cried the two samurai, "we will accept your invitation." And passing to the upper end of the apartment, they seated themselves upon the matting.

Kampei, kneeling before them with the palms of his hands upon the ground, exclaimed:—"Lately I was absent from my lord's side upon an important occasion; a failure of duty for which it would be vain for me to try to find any excuse. Nevertheless, I implore you to procure my crime to be pardoned. I entreat you, gentlemen, most earnestly, I entreat you to intercede for me that I may be permitted to join with the other retainers of my lord's household in honoring the anniversary of his death."

As he spoke the unfortunate youth was overwhelmed with shame at the recollection of his fault. Goyemon at once replied:

"Listen—though a ronin without resources you have offered a subscription of a large amount towards the expense of erecting a monument to our dead lord. Yuranoske has been informed of this,

and is full of admiration of your conduct. The monument will be placed in the family burying ground of our lord. But your disloyalty makes it impossible for our chief to receive your subscription. The spirit of our dead lord would be indignant with us were we to accept your money for such a purpose, and we have been ordered therefore to return it to you."

As he concluded Yagoro drew forth from his bosom a paper packet, containing the money which Kampei had thought himself so lucky in finding, and had shortly after handed to Yagoro, and placed the packet before the youth, who, wild with grief and despair at the ruin of all his hopes, burst into tears; in which he was joined by the mother of Okaru.

"Ha, villain!" cried the mother of Okaru, pointing to Kampei, "you are now reaping your reward. Listen, gentlemen, this fellow's father-in-law, a man stricken in years but regardless of his age, sold his daughter into service for the sake of this wretch before you, who, lying in wait for the old man as he was returning home, murdered him and robbed him of the money. The deed was done in darkness that none might know of it. Sirs, can you accept the assistance of such a man, a parricide, whom if the gods and Buddha do not punish they must surely be deaf to my entreaties. You see the wretch,—a son, a murderer of his father. Hew him in pieces, sirs, I implore you; for I am but a woman and have not the strength to avenge myself with my own hands."

Overcome with her feelings, the unfortunate mother of Okaru again fell exhausted upon the ground, while the two samurai, aghast at the tale, seized their swords.

Yagoro, his voice choked by indignation, exclaimed:—"Kampei, villain! you dared to come to us with your murderer's booty in your hand. You are a wild beast in human form. No samurai ever heard such a tale of horror. A parricide and a thief, you deserve instant crucifixion; and I should be well pleased to spit you with my own hands upon the tree."

*Goyemon.*—"Like the philosopher Koshi (Confucius) who declared that he would rather die of thirst

than drink of the water of a fountain so ill-named as that of To-sen (*i. e.* the fount of robbers), so no man of honor could hold intercourse for a moment with such a wretch as you. How could you dream of offering us your ill-gotten gains for the service of our dead lord? Yuranoske, with his rare sagacity, must have divined what a disloyal and treacherous nature yours was, when he ordered us to return you the money. Blood-thirsty wretch, your name will be handed down to posterity as that of the infamous villain Hayano Kampei, a retainer of Yenya. Idiot that you are; could you not at least remember what disgrace you were bringing upon your lord's house? I never took you to be such a madman; some demon must surely have entered into you."

Goaded by these reproaches into a kind of despair, his eyes fixed and overflowing with bitter tears, Kampei, unable to withstand the fatality that seemed to pursue him, suddenly threw off the upper part of his dress; then grasping his sword, unsheathed it, and with one stab gashed open his bowels.

"Alas!" he cried bitterly, "I dare not show my face again to men. As soon as I knew that my hopes were vain, I made ready for what was inevitable. As to the murder of my father-in-law, I will explain how his death occurred; so that the name of my dead lord may not be dishonored. I pray you hearken to me, sirs. After I parted from Yagoro the other night, it soon became dark, and, as I followed a hill-track, I suddenly disturbed a wild boar and sent a couple of bullets after him. As I came up close and bent over what I thought was the carcass of the animal, I saw to my horror that I had accidentally shot some way-farer. Having no medicines with me, I searched the dead man's dress and came upon the purse. Possibly I did wrong in taking it, but it seemed to me, then, as if it had been sent to me from Heaven. I immediately hurried away after Yagoro, and gave him the contents. When I got home I heard what my mother-in-law here has just told you, that my wife had been sold; and soon afterwards the dead body of her father, slain by a gun-shot, was brought in. My evil destiny

was uppermost, and circumstances and I seemed to suit each other as little as the mandibles of an Iska fowl's bill.* Now you can realize to yourself the hardship of my position."

As he concluded, his eyes suffused and he gave vent to his despair in a flood of tears.

Yagoro, as if struck by a sudden thought, rose up hastily and began to examine the corpse. On raising it and turning it over a large gash became visible.

"Goyemon," he cried to his companion, "look here, this is no gun-shot wound, it is a sword cut. Kampei you have been over hasty."

The mother of Okaru was so astonished by the discovery that she could not utter a word.

Goyemon, across whose mind a sudden recollection flashed, exclaimed:—"Now I remember,—you too cannot have forgotten,—the corpse we passed on our road here, with a gun-shot wound in it. We went up to it and found it was the body of Ono Sadakuro, whose father—that covetous wretch Ono Kudaiu—tired of the fellow's evil course of life, had turned him out of the house. We have heard that the son not having a mat to bless himself with, had taken to robbery in the hills. Without doubt, Kampei, this Sadakuro was the villain that murdered your father-in-law."

"What?" cried the mother of Okaru, bending over the corpse and examining the wound, "Kampei then was not the murderer of my husband? O! son-in-law!" turning to the unfortunate youth, "I pray you with clasped hands to forgive me. I am but a silly, stupid old woman, and you will bear with me and pardon me for all that I have said. Kampei, Kampei, you shall not, must not die," turning her face streaming with tears to him as she spoke.

*Kampei.*—"Now that what seemed evil in my conduct has been explained, mother, I can face the dark path in peace. Soon I shall be with my father-in-law and we shall climb together the Shidé Hill." †

* A kind of wild fowl with mandibles of unequal length.

† See Appendix.

Goyemon, interrupting Kampei who had seized the sword which still remained in the wound with the purpose of hastening his death, exclaimed:

"Ah, Kampei, yet a little patience; without knowing it you have slain your father's murderer. Fortune has not been all against you, and by the favor of the Archer-God, you have been enabled to take a glorious revenge. But I have something to show to you ere you die; look here," drawing a paper from his bosom and spreading it open before the dying youth, "at the foot of this is a list of samurai who have sworn to take the life of our enemy Morohawo." Goyemon commenced to read the paper, but Kampei interrupted him, saying: "Tell me the names of the conspirators."

*Goyemon.*—"We are forty-five in all, but now that I have come to know how truly loyal and devoted a retainer you have been, I shall add your name to the list, and I give you this paper that you may take it with you on the dark path, and reverently offer it to our lord Yenya."

He then took an ink horn from his bosom and after writing down Kampei's name handed the paper to him, exclaiming:

"Seal it, Kampei, seal it with your blood."

Kampei obeyed, pressing his bloody hands upon the paper.

"I have sealed it," he exclaimed. "Comrades, I cannot thank you enough, you have enabled me to obtain what I most wished for in the world. Mother do not grieve, my father's death and my wife's service will not now be of no avail. The money will be used by these gentlemen who have sworn the death of the enemy of our house."

The mother of Okaru, her eyes filled with tears, placed the packet with the purse and the money which Ichimonjiya had brought, before the two samurai.

"Pray accept this purse as a token of my son-in-law's share in your enterprise; and consider that his spirit is with you in your plot against your enemy."

"We will; we will," replied Goyemon, taking up the purse. "We will prize this purse of striped cloth as if it were full of barred Ogon,* Sir," turning to Kampei, "may the perfection of Buddha be yours."

"Alas!" said Kampei, "the perfection of Buddha is not to be dreamt of by such a wretch as myself. The hand of death is upon me, but my soul will remain on earth that it may be with you when you strike our enemy."

His voice was rapidly failing, and the mother of Okaru, seeing the end was near, burst into loud lamentations.

"O! Kampei, Kampei! my daughter is away and knows nothing of all this misery. If only she were here to look upon you once more ere you die."

"Nay, nay, mother, let her know nothing of her father's death, nothing of my death. She has gone to service for the sake of our lord Yenya; and if she were told of all that has occurred, she might neglect her duties which would be like disloyalty to our dead chief. Let things remain as they are. And now," he resumed, "my mind is at ease;" and thrusting his sword into his throat, he fell back and died.

*Mother.*—"Son-in-law, son-in-law, alas! alas! he is dead! Is there any one in the world so wretched as I? my husband murdered, my son-in-law, to whom I looked for support after my man's death, a corpse before my eyes, my darling daughter separated from me, none but myself, a poor old woman, left,—why should I live all alone in the world, what have I to hope for! O, Yoichibei, Yoichibei, would that I were with you."

Her sobs prevented further utterance for a time. At last mastering her emotion for a moment, she struggled to her feet,

* A gold coin of considerable value. See Appendix.

"Son-in-law, son-in-law," she exclaimed, "take me with you;" and falling upon his body she embraced it convulsively, the tears raining down from her eyes as she gazed now on the corpse of her daughter's husband, now on that of Yoichibei, until at last exhausted by grief and despair she sank on the ground unable to utter a word.

*Goyemon.*—"Come, mistress; do not grieve so much. I know it is very hard to bear; but it may comfort you if I tell you that I shall inform our chief Ohoboshi of the manner of Kampei's death. You had better keep this money, a hundred riyos in all. 'Twill buy a hundred masses—fifty for the repose of your husband's soul, and fifty for that of your son-in-law's; and you will be able to have all the funeral rites decently conducted. And now," continued Goyemon, "we must take our leave of you. Fare you well, mistress."

"Farewell!" repeated Yagoro.

The two samurai then departed, the tears standing in their eyes; while the mother of Okaru, as she gazed after their retreating forms, could not refrain from weeping.

End of Book VI.

## BOOK SEVENTH.

### The Discomfiture of Kudaiu.

THE tea-house of Ichiriki, in the Gion street at Kioto, was full of joyous uproar. Bevies of beautiful girls flitted to and fro in the apartments, a very paradise of painted goddesses, brilliant with every charm. Rubbing his dull eyes, dazzled by the glancing lights, and wildered by the merry tumult within, Ono Kudaiu staggered up to the gate of the tea-house and knocked at it in a confused manner.

"Hallo there! What! No landlord within; landlord, landlord!"

"You seem in a hurry," cried a voice from the inside, "whoever you may be"—"Who are you?" the voice continued, after a pause, the speaker opening the gate as he uttered the last words. "Yeh! what,—Ono Kudaiu, can it be your honor, with a gentleman too; pray enter, sirs, pray enter."

And the servant—for the speaker was none other—bowed respectfully as he spoke.

*Kudaiu.*—"Yes, this gentleman visits the capital for the first time. You seem to be deuced busy here at present, but I suppose you can let us have a room where we can have a quiet drop together."

*Servant.*—"Plenty of rooms, but a rich gentleman named Yuranoske has engaged all the ground

floor for a sort of theatrical divertisement he is giving, in which all the most famous women of the place appear; however, there is a small side room at your service."

*Kudaiu.*—"Of course, full of dirt and cobwebs, I suppose."

*Servant.*—"Still as much a grumbler as ever."

*Kudaiu.*—"Grumbler! no, but I am getting old, and must look out lest I become entangled in women's webs."

*Servant.*—"At least you are as pleasant a gentleman as ever—well, I can find you a good room up stairs." "Hallo, some of you there," continued the servant, calling loudly for attendants, "light a fire, bring *sake* cups and tobacco, quick, pipes and bon—n—n—n;" uttering the last word in a loud ringing tone that chimed in well with the ding of samisen and drum that came from the apartments where Yuranoske and his crew of laughing girls were revelling. "What do you think of all this, Bannai," cried Kudaiu, turning to his companion, "You see how Yuranoske spends his time."

*Bannai.*—"Well, sir, the man seems somewhat crazed. Your private letters to our lord hinted as much, but our master had no idea the fellow was as mad as this. I was ordered to come here and make inquiries, and if I saw anything suspicious I was to send word at once; but faith, it is clear to me that I shall not have anything whatever to report. His son, that lout, Rikiya, by the by, do you know what he is about?"

*Kudaiu.*—"The lad seems to come here occasionally and rival his father in dissipation. One would think that father and son would hardly dare to riot in company with each other, and my object in coming here to-night was to endeavor to find out if there was anything at the bottom of it all. Softly, softly, speak low,—come, we will go up stairs."

*Bannai.*—"I will follow your honor."

*Kudaiu.*—"Well, then, come."

"False, false your heart, I know it well,
"You swear you love me, love me, while
"Your lips a flattering tale but tell,
"Your heart is ever full of guile:
"Your love is like the flower's hue,
"That fades, almost ere seen, from view."

Such were the words that fell upon the ears of Kudaiu and his follower, as they made their way to the room allotted them, sung by one of the girls iu the apartments below, whose voice rose clear above the din of samisen, drums, laughter and revelry. Meanwhile, several former retainers of Yenya, now ronin, approached the side entrance.

"Yagoro, Kitahachi, sirs," cried one of them, whose name was Yazama, "this is the house where Yuranoske, our chief, passes his time; it is called Ichirikiya. Ha! Heiyemou," addressing one of his companions, who seemed to be the follower, rather than the equal of the rest, "I shall not forget the matter you spoke of; you can remain in the servants' quarters until I want you."

*Heiyemon.*—"I am much obliged to your honor; I venture to ask your honor to do your best for me."

Heiyemon then withdrew.

Yazama knocking at the side entrance, asked for admission. A girl's voice answered from within, exclaiming; "Ai, ai, there—who are you, what is your name?"

*Yazama.*—"Iya! Go and tell Sir Yura that Yazama Jiuro, Senzaki Yagoro and Takemori Kitahachi are here, and desire to speak with him. Tell him that we have sent messenger after messenger to him but without ever getting any answer; so that we are obliged to ask him to see us in person, a request which we hope he will not refuse; take care you give the message correctly."

*Servant.*—"I really am afraid, gentlemen, that you have taken all this trouble for nothing. For

the last three days his honor has been feasting and drinking, and what with *sake* and excitement, has got into such a muddled and confused state that it will be some time before he is himself again."

*Yazama.*—"You don't say so—however, never mind, give the message all the same."

The girl, who, meantime, had admitted the three strangers, nodded assent, and hastily left the spot.

"Did you hear, Yagoro," continued Yazama, turning to one of his companions, "did you hear what the girl said?"

*Yagoro.*—"I did, and she astonished me not a little. I had heard something of our chief's dissipation, but thought it was merely put on to lull our enemy into a false security. But this looks like reality; he seems to have given himself up entirely to pleasure. I cannot make it out at all."

*Kitahachi.*—"You see it is just as I told you. Yura's disposition has become completely altered; the best thing we can do will be to rush in upon him and slay him on the spot."

*Yazama.*—"No, no, that will never do, we must at all events have some talk with him first."

*Yagoro.*—"True, and therefore we must wait here a little until the girl returns." Just then, Yuranoske, with his eyes bandaged, appeared, staggering towards where the three ronin were standing, and surrounded by a number of girls, with whom he was enacting the part of devil in a game of blind man's buff. "This way, devil, this way," cried the girls, shouting with laughter as they frolicked about the drunken fellow. "This way, where you hear our hands clapping."

"Caught, caught."

"Not yet, Yura, not just yet, devil."

"If I catch one of you, I'll make her gulp down a good draught of *sake;* she shall have a good pull, I promise you; ha! I've got some one," seizing Yazama as he spoke, "bring the *sake* pot, quick, quick."

*Yazama,* disengaging himself,—"Yuranoske, I am Yazama Jiutaro, don't you know me; what can all this buffoonery mean?"

*Yuranoske.*—"Namu-sambo, the game is all up now."

*One of the Women.*—"What kill-joys those great hulking fellows are, Sakaye-san; samurai, I suppose, friends of our Yuranoske!"

*Sakaye.*—"I suppose they are—a horrid-looking trio too."

*Yazama.*—"Pray excuse us, ladies, we have some matters to talk over with this gentleman, and we must ask you to be good enough to leave him with us for a little time."

"Of course," cried a number of the women together, "we knew you would want us to go; well, we are off—Yura, you will come back to us soon."

Having got rid of the girls, Yazama turned to Yuranoske, who had lain himself down on the matting in an apparent stupor.

"Yuranoske, I am Yazama Jiutaro."

"And I am Takemori Kitahachi."

"I am Senzaki Yagoro; pray rouse yourself, we should be glad if you would listen to what we have to say."

"Ah!" cried Yuranoske, rising with a surprised air, "quite a number of you,—you are heartily welcome, I am sure, but what have you come for?"

"We have come to learn," interrupted Yazama, "when we are to start for Kamakura."

"Start for Kamakura? That is a tremendously important matter, to be sure; what does that Tamba versemaker—Yôsaku, I think they call him—say,

'Away, away to Yedo we'——

"I beg your pardon, I am sure, I hardly know what I am talking about."

"Yah!" exclaimed the three, simultaneously, "you've drunk yourself stupid; come, we will try if we cannot recall you to your senses." And, drawing their swords, they were on the point of falling

upon their chief, when Heiyemon, who had just come upon the scene, threw himself between them and his master.

"Stop," cried the faithful follower, "put up your weapons. I must ask pardon, gentlemen," he continued, "for interrupting you; mean fellow though I be, I must implore you to restrain yourselves for awhile." "Your honor," he added, turning to his chief, "I most heartily hope I see your honor in good health."

*Yura.*—"Pfuh—Teraoka Heiyemon, is it? Ah! I remember you; you were sent northwards with letters lately; a quick-footed soldier enough, I see."

*Heiyemon.*—"I am Heiyemon, please your honor. While up north, I heard of the self-dispatch of our lord. Namu-sambo! I turned my steps homeward without a moment's delay, but the news reached me while journeying south, of the destruction of our lord's house, and of the dispersion of the clan, and I was beside myself with grief and rage. Though a common soldier, merely, I could not forget that I owed everything to our lord's favor, and a burning desire to revenge the destruction of our house took possession of me. I went to Kamakura, and for three months lived in the greatest wretchedness, dogging Moronawo's movements continually, in the hope of finding some opportunity of striking the fellow dead at a blow, but he never went out without being surrounded by guards, and I could not, therefore, get at him. In despair, I thought there was nothing left but to commit self-dispatch, but then the recollection of my old parents at home prevented me, and I went to see them. On the road, I heard a rumor (perhaps it was dropped by the sun) that a plot was being set afoot to exact vengeance upon our enemy,—your honor can imagine how delighted I was at the news, and, leaving everything behind me, I sought out the route of you gentlemen," turning to the three ronin, "and followed you here, trusting that you would have the infinite kindness to listen to my humble request, and intercede for me with his honor for permission to add my name to the list of conspirators."

"Ha!" cried Yuranoske, "you're quick of tongue, it seems, as well as quick of foot—you ought to be clown to some strolling company. As for me, my desire for vengeance is just about strong enough to make me smash a flea, if I had an axe ready in my hand, to satisfy it, and no more; it would be strange, then, if I should take the pains to get up a conspiracy with forty or fifty comrades. Why, look you, if the plot failed my neck would pay the penalty; if it succeeded, self-dispatch would inevitably follow; death any way. Where would be the use of seeking vengeance if I could not live to enjoy it,—one does not swallow *jinseng* medicine one moment to get strangled the next. Besides, you were but a common soldier getting your five rios a year and three rations a day; why should you trouble yourself about our lord's misfortunes? Your pay was hardly more than a begging priest's alms; for you to throw away your life in order to revenge Yenya would be as absurd as if a man were to give a high Kagura feast* in return for a morsel of laver. If you are bound to take one head, I, with my salary of 1,500 *kokus*, ought to take a bushel of heads at least. You had better get rid of this notion of yours about joining a plot; it is not fashionable to be grateful for past benefits when no more are likely to be conferred. Come, *tsu-tsu-ten*, *tsu-tsu-ten*, don't you hear the joyous note of the *samisen*; away, and make merry."

"Your honor cannot be in earnest," exclaimed Heiyemon. "My pay, true, was small enough, and your honor held a high post, but did we not both draw our livelihood from one and the same source? There is no question here of high or low; I cannot oppose my pedigree to your honor's; you were our lord's deputy. The form of a fellow like me has no right to be seen among you great gentlemen, I know that well enough, but oh, your honor, listen to my entreaty, do not deem me over-bold, and pardon me my blunt speech. I am really nothing but an ape in the likeness of a man, 'tis true, still I implore

* See Appendix.

you to let me follow you; if only to tie your sandals or carry your burdens, take me with you, you cannot refuse me this boon, you . . . —ha! he has fallen asleep."

*Kitahachi.*—"Asleep, aye, so he is, miserable wretch. You need waste no further words with him; Yuranoske may be looked upon as a dead man. Yazama, Senzaki, sirs, you now see what this brute's real disposition is; shall we make an end of him, as was our intention?"

*Yazama, Senzaki.*—"Yes, yes, his fate will serve as a warning to the other conspirators—upon him there." They laid their hands on their swords, but Heiyemon again interposed, and with some difficulty prevailed upon the three *ronin* to give him a hearing.

"Sirs," exclaimed the foot-soldier, "if you will look more closely at the circumstances you will see that Yuranoske's conduct may be explicable. Ever since our lord was taken from us, his honor has been harassed by the thought of vengeance upon our clan's enemy, and none can know what cares have been heaped upon him, or what anxieties he has had to pass through, in the exact performance of the duties devolving upon him. Look, too, how he has been forced to bear in silence the contumely of men, and restrain his just indignation. If he did not, now and then, drink a bottle of *saké*, he would die, worn out with trouble and vexation. He will recover from his stupor ere long, and you will see him once more in full possession of his faculties."

Yielding to the justice of Heiyemon's address, the three ronin, accompanied by the foot-soldier, left the apartment.

* * * * * * * * * *

Meanwhile, the light of the night-lamps was equally shed over the evil and the good, and Yuranoske, the three ronin, and Kudain, beneath the same roof, were separated from each other only by the paper screens.

Now the waning moonlight began to merge in the breaking dawn, and Rikiya, breathless with the

haste with which he had made his way from Yamashima, peeped over the paper screen, within which Yura was lying in a heavy sleep, and, fearful of rousing some of the other inmates of the house, gently approached his father's slumbering form, and clashed his sword slightly. The Karo instantly rose to his feet, as if awakened by the ring of stirrup.*

"Yah, Rikiya," he exclaimed, "the noise of your sword has awakened me; what need presses now? Softly, softly."

"Here is a letter from the Lady Kawoyo, which I was ordered to bring to you without a moment's delay."

"Have you any verbal message to give as well?"

"Our clan's enemy, Moronawo, has obtained permission to return to his lands, and in a few days will be ready to start. Details will be found in the letter."

"Good. You can return home now, and at nightfall send me a kago; away with you."

Rikiya bowed assent, and at once left the apartment.

Yuranoske, eager to learn the contents of the letter, was in the act of opening it when Kudaiu appeared.

"Ha, Sir Yura," cried the new comer, "I am Kudaiu; I hope I do not intrude upon you."

"Far from it," replied Yuranoske, concealing his vexation, "it is quite an age since we met; a year at least, I should suppose. So, here you are, longing no doubt to rub out the wrinkles in your forehead; you will enjoy yourself a little, ere you leave, I make no doubt."

*Kudaiu.*—"Iya, Sir Yura, heroes bent upon great exploits, they say, don't mind small matters, and the way in which, careless of all reproach, you commence your enterprise by idling your time away in a girl-house,—faith it's splendid, admirable!"

* Alluding to the saying, "Yushi wa kutsuwa no oto de ne wo samasu," *i. e.*, "at ring of stirrup the sleeping hero wakes."

*Yura.*—"Ho! You're hard upon me, hard upon me, Kudaiu, with such an artillery of words; but truce to all this."

*Kudaiu.*—"Well, Sir Yura, I know you are no fool; come, tell me, is not this dissipation all a pretence, to cloak your designs against Moronawo?"

*Yura.*—"Cloak designs against Moronawo, indeed; your supposition is an admirable one. Here am I, over forty years old, and do you think I should run the risk of being twitted with hankering after women, called an old fool, and laughed at as crazy, to cloak any such designs as you hint at; the idea is absurd, Kudaiu."

*Kudaiu.*—"Then you have really no intention of planning revenge against Moronawo."

*Yura.*—"Not I; not a whit of it. When the clan's property was confiscated, I spoke of dying upon our own ground, but this was merely to flatter the dowager. You remember you said that to oppose the order of the government was equivalent to declaring oneself a public enemy, and so would have nothing more to do with us. After you left, we talked a good deal of nonsense, but nothing came of it all. We gave out that we intended to go to the burying ground and there dispatch ourselves, but this was a mere blind; we got out by the rear gate and here we are, as you see, happy enough. I have not forgotten what an old comrade you are; don't let any anxieties trouble you, but take your pleasure and be merry."

*Kudaiu.*—"Ah! I could be merry enough in my younger days; I was as full of wild tricks as the fox Shinoda.* Let us have a draught, Yura; come, it's long since we had one together, let me offer you a cup."

*Yura.*—"Your health, good Kudaiu, with my best wishes."

* One of seven celebrated fox-goblins. The other six are named, Kurosuke, Reita, Sansuke, Osuke, Yatsuyama and Kudsunoha.

*Kudaiu.*—"Drink, and let me have the cup."

*Yura.*—"Take the cup and drink."

*Kudaiu.*—"Won't you have a morsel of fish with your drink?"

Kudaiu taking a piece of cuttle-fish with his chopsticks from a dish beside him, offered it to Yuranoske, who accepted the morsel, exclaiming,

"Ah, a bit of the creature who salutes by throwing out his hands and carrying his feet to his head.† Thanks, thanks."

Yuranoske had lifted the morsel politely to his head, preparatory to swallowing it, when Kudaiu seized his arm, saying,

"How! Yuranoske, on the eve of the anniversary of our lord's death, have you the heart to swallow that piece of cuttle-fish?"

"Why shouldn't I? Have you heard that our master Yenya has been changed with a cuttle-fish? Yeh! he was but a sorry master to us, and it was his stupidity that has made you and me *rônin*. We have all of us good reason to detest his memory, and as to fasting, I cannot see that we are in the least bound so to mortify ourselves for his sake. What a delicious morsel this is you have handed me!" concluded Yuranoske, swallowing it at one gulp without changing a feature, and causing such astonishment to his cunning interlocutor that the latter could not utter a word.

"Ah!" resumed Yuranoske, "it is but ill eating, after all. I will order a fowl to be broiled; come, meanwhile, with me. Here, you women there," he added, in a loud voice, strike up, strike up, *teretsuka teretsuka*, *tsutsuten tsutsuten*, we may as well all make merry together."

And muttering to himself in a drunken fashion he staggered away with a noisy clatter, in the direction of the inner apartments.

† Alluding to the Japanese custom of acknowledging a gift by lifting it to the forehead.

The Bannai, who had watched him closely from the upper room where he had been left by Kudaiu, addressed the latter, entering the apartment:

"It is clear enough that the man has no thought of vengeance in his mind, or he would have been careful not to eat flesh on the anniversary of our lord's death. We may safely inform Moronawo that he need not any longer fear danger from this quarter."

"In truth," replied Kudaiu, "it does not look as if anything was to be dreaded from such a fellow—and see!" he continued, pointing to a corner of the room, "he has left his sword there, plain proof that he is nothing but a spiritless brute; the blade is all red with rust as a rotten herring. We know the true character of the man at last, and need trouble ourselves about him no further. Ho, there! bearers, my *kago* here; quick, get in, Bannai."

*Bannai.*—"Nay, you are an old man, you had better use it."

*Kudaiu*, (entering the *kago*.)—"With your permission, then."

*Bannai.*—"By the by, I have heard that Kampei's wife, Okaru, is in the house; you remember her, Kudaiu, do you not?"

Surprised at receiving no answer, the Bannai drew aside the blinds of the *kago*, and, looking in, was astonished to see nothing but a huge stepping-stone,* out of the court-yard.

"Kowa!" he exclaimed, "this is strange. Has Kudaiu met with the fate of the Princess Sayo of Matsura?" †

As he looked round with a perplexed air, he suddenly heard himself addressed by Kudaiu from beneath the flooring, under which the latter had crept.

"Bannai, Bannai, this is but a device of mine. Just now, Rikiya brought his father a letter which

* Such as are generally found in court-yards of Japanese houses, for use in wet weather.

† Said to have drowned herself from disappointed love; and to have been turned into a stone.

has caused me some anxiety. I want to find out what its contents are, and as soon as I do, I shall let you know. Meanwhile, accompany the *kago* as if I were in it."

"I understand, I understand," answered the Bannai, nodding his head, as he obeyed his companion's directions.

Meanwhile, Okaru, overcome by the fumes of the sake she had been drinking (she had too easily fallen into the ways of the house), had approached the window of one of the upper rooms looking into the court-yard, to enjoy the fresh air.

Yuranoske, who was in a room underneath, cried to her, "I must leave you for an instant. I have forgotten, samurai though I be, a valuable sword, and must away at once to fetch it. You can change the hanging pictures on the wall and put fresh charcoal in the brasier by the time I return."

"Ah, what is this," he muttered, as he left the room, "a samisen? I suppose I must take care not to tread upon it and break it."

Re-entering the parlor where he had had his conversation with Kudaiu, he was surprised to find the latter had gone.

The cool morning air blew in refreshingly upon Okaru's heated face, as she leaned out of the window and listened pensively to the sound of revelry that still proceeded, though fitfully, from where she had left her companions. But a sadness fell upon her as the following lines, from an old song, struck her ear:—

"Hearken how the childish voices,
Father, mother dear, repeat:
Now the wayworn spouse rejoices,
Wife and little ones to meet."

And she was almost glad as the singer broke off into the phrase, "'tis a sorry song, I'll sing no more." *

* A common phrase, said, not sung, at the termination of a song or some portion of a song; a sort of polite self-deprecia-

Yuranoske, meanwhile, looking around for a light by which to read the letter Rikiya had brought him, caught sight of a lantern hanging by a small doorway in a corner of the court, and went up to it. The dowager's letter was a long one like most women's epistles, full of small details and repetitions, and crammed with '*mairase-soros.*' * Okaru, who was watching Yuranoske from her room, which was just above the lantern, thinking the letter might be from some rival, leant over the balustrade, straining her eyes in the vain attempt to make out what it was about. A way of satisfying her curiosity, however, suddenly suggested itself. She disappeared for a moment, quickly returning with a bright metal mirror in her hand, by the aid of which she managed to read the letter from beginning to end.

Kudaiu, who had all this time lain concealed under the flooring of the adjoining room, † by furtive glances at the long slip of paper ‡ which Yuranoske, not being a god, could not suppose was within the ken of other eyes than his own, and had allowed to fall upon the ground as he unrolled it, in the full light of the waning moon, continued to make himself master of the contents of the letter, and further managed to tear off a portion which he intended to keep as a proof. Just then a metal ornament fell from Okaru's hair upon the stones below, and Yuranoske, startled by the noise, looked suddenly up, instinctively hiding the letter behind his back. A cunning smile crossed Kudaiu's face, while Okaru, confused at being detected, hastily shut up the mirror, exclaiming, "Is that Yura?"

tion on the part of the singer. Okaru is sad because the lines cause her to think of her lover, Kampei, from whom she has been so long separated.

* In Japanese letters the word "*gozasoro,*" a polite epistolary form of the substantive verb, is constantly occurring. For "*gozasoro*" the word "*mairase-soro,*" (lit. to cause to proceed,) is commonly used by women and others not well versed in the complicated mysteries of the forms of Japanese correspondence.

† The flooring of a Japanese house is always raised above the ground, and is open, more or less, all round.

‡ A letter, if of any length, is always written upon a long, narrow slip of paper, and afterwards rolled up and fastened in various ways.

"What! Okaru, what are you about up there?"

"Why, the *sake* you made me drink has overcome me, so I came out to see if the cool air would revive me a little."

"O, you came out to see if the cool air would revive you, did you. Iya, Okaru, I have something to say to you. I cannot say it to you up there. I might as well be talking to you on the bridge of heaven; come down to me and you shall hear it."

"You have something to say to me? Why, what can you have to tell me?"

"Just so; but come down, you cannot hear me up there."

"Well, I will go round by the stairs and come to you."

"No, no, if you go round, some of the servants will get hold of you and make you drink more *sake*. Is there no other way—ha! here is the very thing; see, you can come down this ladder."

And seizing a small ladder that stood close by, Yuranoske placed it against the eaves of the verandah.

"I cannot come down that way," cried Okaru, "I should be frightened, I know; I should be sure to fall."

"There is no danger," exclaimed Yuranoske, "none whatever; you need not fear, a strapping girl like you."

"Don't be so silly, it is like being in a boat, I know I shall tumble."

The girl however, got upon the ladder, and began to descend, but very reluctantly. "Quick, quick," cried Yuranoske, "or I will pull you down."

Frightened at his tone, she descended a few steps and then again hesitated. Irritated at her slowness, Yuranoske sprang upon the ladder, and seizing the girl, lifted her to the ground.

*Yura.*—"We have changed places, it seems; you ought to seek me as a guest of the house rather than I you. What did you see up there, tell me."

*Okaru.*—"See? Oh, I did not see anything."

*Yura.*—"You did, you did; tell me."

*Okaru.*—"Why, what should I see—the letter seemed to please you."

*Yura.*—"You read the whole of it from up there."

*Okaru.*—"I have told you I saw nothing—you are troublesome."

Yuranoske, persuaded that she had read the whole, could not conceal his vexation. Okaru coming softly up to him exclaimed, "What is it, Yuranoske; what is annoying you?"

*Yura.*—"Okaru, you know I have long loved you; I want you to be my wife."

*Okaru.*—"Don't say that; you know you are not speaking the truth."

*Yura.*—"What I said to you some time ago about making you mine might be false then, but I am now in earnest. Say yes, say yes."

*Okaru.*—"No, I will not."

*Yura.*—"Why?"

*Okaru.*—"You are not in earnest; you were more in earnest before than you are now."

*Yura.*—"What if I purchase you?"

*Okaru.*—"Eh!"

*Yura.*—"To show that I am in earnest, I will see the proprietor of the house at once."

*Okaru.*—"I hardly know. I——"

*Yura.*—"If you have a lover I will assist you both afterwards."

*Okaru.*—"If I could be sure of that—but are you speaking truly?"

*Yura.*—"I am, on my honor as a samurai. Remain with me but three days and then you shall be quite free."

*Okaru.*—"I should like that immensely, but you are only joking with me"

*Yura.*—"Far from it; I will see the proprietor of the house and make arrangements at once. Do not trouble yourself about the matter, but stay here quietly for a little time, until I return."

*Okaru.*—"Well, then, I will do so, you may trust me."

*Yura.*—"Above all, do not stir from the place until I come back; you are mine now you know."

*Okaru.*—"But for three days only."

*Yura.*—"Of course, of course."

The girl was overjoyed at the prospect held out to her, and loaded Yuranoske with thanks, as he hasted away to fulfil his promise. As she stood there, full of glad thoughts, she heard one of her companions singing

"All the wide world cannot show
Grief the like of mine;
Endless is the weary woe,
As for him I pine."

(*'Tis a sorry song; I'll sing no more.*)

"List'ning thro' the lengthen'd night,
To the marsh-bird's shriek;
Sad I mourn my lonely plight,
Sleep in vain I seek."

And saddened by the words, she fell into a melancholy mood, in the midst of which she was surprised by the unlooked-for appearance of her brother Heiyemon.

"How! Sister, is that you?" said the new-comer.

"My brother!" exclaimed the girl, in confusion, covering her face with her hands. "O, what a shameful thing, to be seen by you in this place!"

"Nay, sister, not so," answered her brother, gently. "On my return from the East, I heard the whole story from our mother; 'tis for your husband's sake, for our lord's service, that you have been sold; do not be ashamed, sister, you have acted nobly."

*Okaru.*—"O brother, your kindness has made me quite happy—but I have got something to tell you, that will gladden you too. This very night, a gentleman is to take charge of me from the proprietor; the offer was altogether a surprise to me."

*Heiyemon.*—"That is most fortunate; who is he?"

*Okaru.*—"You know him very well; it is Ohoboshi Yuranoske."

*Heiyemon.*—"What! Yuranoske has promised to take charge of you; is he really fond of you?"

*Okaru.*—"No, I don't think he is; he has only treated me several times during the last two or three days. He says, afterwards he will let me join my affianced, and let me go to him if I like. I could not meet with a better chance, could I?"

*Heiyemon.*—"Does he know you are betrothed to Hayano Kampei?"

*Okaru.*—"No, he does not. I thought if I told him he might imagine that my being here cast shame upon my parents and upon Kampei."

*Heiyemon* (pensively)—"H'm, he seems to have become really a dissipated fellow. It looks very much as if he had given up all thoughts of revenging our lord's death."

*Okaru.*—"Nay, you are wrong there, quite wrong, I can assure you, brother, but—don't speak so loud—listen." And the girl whispered to him the contents of the letter.

*Heiyemon.*—"Are you sure that you read the letter correctly?"

*Okaru.*—"Yes, the whole of it. Afterwards, he came close up to me and began to joke with me, and at last asked me to let him take charge of me."

*Heiyemon* (gravely)—"All this took place, then, after you had read the letter?"

*Okaru.*—"Yes; but why are you so solemn."

*Heiyemon.*—"Ah! I understand it now. Sister, your days are numbered; you cannot escape. You must let me decide your fate."

As the youth spoke, he suddenly drew his sword and aimed a stroke at his sister, who escaped it by a quick movement.

"Brother, brother," she cried, "what have I done wrong? Both my betrothed and my parents are alive; they must punish me if I have done wrong, not you. But if Yuranoske takes charge of me I shall soon see both Kampei and my father and mother again. It was the thought of that made me so glad,—brother, do not be angry with me, even if I have done wrong."

And she clasped her hands in entreaty, as she spoke. Her brother, flinging the naked blade away, threw himself upon the ground in an agony of grief, bending his head down to hide his tears.

"Poor sister!" he cried, "you do not know, you do not know—our father is no more. He was cut down and murdered, on the twenty-ninth of the sixth month."

"Murdered! my father!"

"Aye, murdered. But that is not all. Oh, sister, try to bear the ill news; your betrothed, Kampei, whom you hope so soon to rejoin, he too is gone; he has committed self-dispatch!"

"O, brother, it cannot be true! O me! O me! my betrothed Kampei, he too dead!—tell me, brother it is not true," she cried, clinging to the youth's arm as she spoke, and bursting into tears.

"Too true, sister, alas! But it would be out of place to tell you the sad story just now. Our poor mother was beside herself with grief, and her tears flowed constantly as she spoke to me of our loss. She begged me not to say anything about it to you, lest you should weep yourself to death at the terrible news. And I should have still kept silence did I not know that you cannot now escape your fate. Yuranoske is immovable where his duty as a loyal retainer is concerned. Knowing nothing of your

relation to Kampei, he never had any intention of taking charge of you; still less did any thought of love for you cross his mind. The letter you read contained matter of great importance, and it is quite clear that he only wanted to get hold of you to put you to death, and so keep his secret. You know the proverb, "walls have ears." * If his designs were to get wind, even if not through you, your fault would be still as great. You have read a secret letter and cannot escape your fate. Better to die by my hand than by that of some other man, and if I slay you and tell our chief that, though you were my sister, I could not pardon you, as knowing what ought not to be entrusted to a woman, he will let me add my name to the list of conspirators, and I shall share with him the glory of the enterprise." †

"What makes the meanness of my condition so intolerable is, that unless I show the world that there is in me what makes me superior to the mass of men, I cannot hope to be allowed to take part in our chief's undertaking. You understand me, sister; give me your life, let yourself die at my hands."

The unfortunate girl, sobbing, sobbing all the time, could not at first make any reply; mastering her emotion, however, by a strong effort, she at last exclaimed:

"I have heard nothing from Kampei as to what was done with the money Ichiriki gave for me, but I thought it was to be used in aid of Yuranoske's designs, and that Kampei when he left us took it with him for that purpose, and our separation under such circumstances was very hard to bear. And now my betrothed is dead, not yet in his thirtieth year. Oh me! what a miserable fate! my father, too, murdered! But at least I trust I am not doing wrong in saying this, he had had many years of life and could better afford to die than my promised husband. Oh! why was I not sent for to see him;

* "Kabe ni mimi, tokkuri ni kuchi," walls have ears and bottles have mouths.

† It is hardly necessary to comment upon the cold-blooded and selfish ferocity here exhibited. But "Chiushin" was the supreme virtue of the samurai of old Japan, and to it, just as to the nobler sentiment of patriotism among the ancient Greeks and Romans, all the tender feelings were required to be sacrificed.

he must have wished so earnestly to see me before he died. Miserable wretch that I am, I knew nothing of their sad fate and have never mourned for them, for my father and my husband, both now no more. O, what have I to live for! But I must not die by your hand, brother, or our mother will be angry with you. Let me end my life myself. You can still take my head, or my whole body if you like, and show one or the other in proof of your devoted loyalty."

"Farewell, brother, farewell," she concluded, after a pause, taking up the sword he had thrown away and placing the point against her throat. At this crisis Yuranoske suddenly came upon the scene. Perceiving how matters were he hastily caught Okaru's arm, exclaiming,

"Patience, patience, this must not be."

"Let go, let go," cried the girl excitedly, while her brother stood by, transfixed with astonishment at the unlooked-for appearance of his chief—"I will, I must die."

"Ho, there," replied Yuranoske, forcing the sword out of the girl's hand. "Brother and sister, listen to me. You have cleared away all doubt from my mind; you sir," turning to the brother, "shall accompany me to the East, while your sister shall not die, but live, and the dead shall be duly mourned."

"No, no," said the girl, "I will not mourn for them, I will join them on the dark path," trying to seize the sword as she spoke.

"Your affianced, Kampei," exclaimed Yuranoske, keeping firm hold on the sword, "is one of us, but has not yet had the luck to slay a single one of our enemies; and now that he is among those who no more are, he will be at a loss what to say to our lord; but he shall be at a loss no longer. Look here."

And jumping on the floor of the adjoining room he thrust the sword between a division of the matting, and, through the planking beneath, pierced Kudaiu, who lay hidden there, over and over again, through the back.

"Drag the fellow out," cried Yuranoske, at last.*

Heiyemon flew to obey his chief, and seizing Kūdain's blood-stained form, pulled the wretch roughly out.

"Yah," cried the soldier, "that rascal Kudain? This is a piece of good luck, indeed"—flinging the miserable man down at his chief's feet as he spoke.

Yuranoske, to prevent his prostrate victim from rising, caught hold of his cue, and forced his head roughly back, exclaiming,

"Wretch! Thou hast played the part of the vermin in the lion's belly, who seek to destroy what gives them food and shelter."

"Well rewarded by our lord, and honored by his especial favor, thou hast become a dog of a follower of his murderer Moronawo; secretly informing the enemy of our clan of everything, true or not true, that thou couldest get wind of! Listen. Forty and more of us have left our parents, abandoned our families, and given our wives, with whom we thought to pass our lives, to be harlots that we might take vengeance upon our dead lord's enemy. Sleeping or waking, or dreaming, the scene of our lord's death was ever present to us, our bowels were twisted with grief, and our eyes ever wet with tears. This very night, the very eve of our lord's death-day—ah, what evil things I have been forced to say about him with my lips; but at least in my heart I heaped reverence upon reverence for his memory,—this very night was it thou chosest to offer me flesh. I said nor yea nor nay as I took it, but O! with what shame, with what anguish did I, whose family for three generations have served the house of

* According to some editions, Yuranoske, on rolling up Kawoyo's letter, after Okaru had been detected in reading it, found that a portion had been torn off, and, always distrustful of Kudaiu, was led by this discovery to guess at the latter's place of concealment. According to others, the Karô saw his former subordinate's face reflected in the mirror, by the aid of which Okaru contrived to make herself mistress of the contents of the dowager's communication, at the moment when, startled by the fall of one of the girl's hair ornaments, he looked up and caught her in the act of reading the letter.

Hang'wan, find myself forced to let food pass my lips on the eve of my lord's death-day! I was beside myself with rage and grief, every limb in my body trembled, and my bones quaked as though they would shiver in pieces. Villian that thou art, devil, hellmate—" and twisting his hand more firmly in the wretch's hair, the infuriated Karô dragged his victim roughly along the ground and flung him heavily on the stones, exclaiming; "Ho there! Heiyemon, I left a rusty sword in yonder room; away with this fellow and hew him in pieces with it; make his death a long and painful one."

"So will I, my lord," answered the soldier, readily; and fetching the weapon, he rushed upon his prey and hacked at him until he was covered with wounds.

"Sir soldier," cried the miserable wretch, endeavoring to creep towards his assailant, and clasping his hands pitifully. "Intercede for me, lady," turning towards Okaru. "I entreat you, ask his lordship to have mercy upon me." Thus was the haughty Kudaiu reduced to seek the aid of a common soldier, to implore the assistance of one who in former days he would scarcely have deigned to see, bowing his head repeatedly in the extremity of his shameful agony.

"Stop, Heiyemon," cried Yuranoske, suddenly bethinking himself, "it might be awkward if we killed the fellow here; take him away with you, as if he were simply dead-drunk."

He threw off his mantle as he spoke, and cast it on his half-dead victim, so as to cover up his wounds.

At this juncture, Yazama, Senzaki, and Takemori threw back the wooden shutters of the adjoining room. "Sir Yuranoske, we humbly crave your pardon for our error."

Yuranoske, paying no heed to them, continued: "Heiyemon, this gentleman is quite drunk, take him to the Kamo stream yonder, and give him a bellyful of water-gruel; away with you."

## BOOK EIGHTH.

### Translator's Note.

THIS is simply a metrical description of the journey of the wife and daughter of Kakogawa Honzo from the eastern capital to Kioto, the object of which is sufficiently indicated in the succeeding Book. An attempt at a metrical version of this portion of the original text will be found in the Appendix; it being thought that an insertion of it in this place would interfere with the action of the story.

## BOOK NINTH.

### The Repentance of Kakogawa Honzo.

ON THE morrow of the day when the events recorded in the Seventh Book took place at the tea-house in the Gion street at Kioto, Yuranoske, whom a heavy fall of snow had detained through the night, returned to the wretched dwelling in the obscure village of Yamashina which circumstances had compelled him to make his home.

He seemed to be still under the influence of *saké*, and was accompanied by a number of servants belonging to the tea-house, who had been charged to conduct him home in safety.

As he entered the courtyard he fell to amusing himself with rolling the snow into a mass, stumbling awkwardly enough as he did so—in fact, he acted like a man whose wits were wandering.

"Ah, your honor," cried his attendants, with a simultaneous note of admiration, "how beautiful everything looks this morning! Watch those bamboos yonder in the courtyard, how gracefully they are swaying under their load of snow—for all the world like what one sees in pictures. Can anything possibly be prettier!"

"Nothing indeed," cried a woman-servant who had come out to meet them; "you need only see this place once never to wish to go elsewhere, I am sure."

"Eh, what!" exclaimed Yuranoske.

'From the shores of Sumiyoshi,'

"You know the song, don't ye?"

'From the shores of Sumiyoshi,
Rising o'er the rippling sea,
Piercing the morning sky,
Piercing the evening sky,
Lo! the hills of Awaji.'*

"Let the wench boast of the place as she likes; for my part, I would rather empty a pot of *saké* in the Gion street than finish a dozen here. You're but a stupid lot after all—into the house with ye, into the house with ye! Hallo! wife," he continued, in a louder voice, "where are you?—here are some visitors."

Muttering to himself in a drunken fashion, the Karo staggered towards the house, where he was greeted by his wife O-Ishi, who came towards him, expressing her delight at his return home, and bringing him a cup of tea as unconcernedly as if she knew nothing of her husband's dissipated habits. The fragrance of the tea, indeed, was not more pleasant to the sense than the charm of O-Ishi's agreeable disposition to the mind, as she met her husband with a cheerful 'What a cold morning it is,' and handed him the tea, to which a little salt had been added, to dissipate the fumes of the *saké*.

Yuranoske, however, merely took a sip and then threw the rest away, exclaiming, "Wife, wife,

* A large island, some distance to the south of Sumiyoshi (a portion of Ozaka).

what stuff is this? Do you think I can drink this, after having been regaled with such splendid *saké* yonder?" "Ha!" he muttered, after a pause, endeavoring to steady himself, "the ground is slippery; it has been snowing, I see."

"Well," cried Ishi, turning to the attendants, "you must not think I take any notice of what Yuranoske says. You had better enter, with the snow, yonder, drifting in with the wind, like loose flakes of cotton."

"Ah, wife!" exclaimed Yuranoske, as they all entered, "you women begin to lose your charms when the children come and household cares commence to press upon you. I am somewhat remiss in my duty to you of late, I confess. O, what pretty girls there were yonder, with complexions pink as Ise prawns! and what capital *saké*, too! True enough the proverb, 'love goes out with the red petticoat.'" *

"Wife, wife," he resumed, after a pause, throwing himself on the ground with an expression of sudden pain, "quick, I have the cramp in my foot, pray chafe it. . . . . Ah! it is better now; that will do, that will do"—thrusting his wife, who was complying with his request, rudely away, as he spoke.

"Enough of this, husband," she cried, "have a care; have a care; you are not yourself yet." "I hope," continued Ishi, addressing herself courteously to the attendants—"I hope you will be good enough to excuse him."

Just then, Rikiya appeared, and inquired after his father.

"He seems asleep, mother; had we not better put a pillow under his head?"

Now, if we were to look a little below the surface, we should find this conduct of the three all a mere pretence, cloaking the reality, like the varnish on the pillow concealing the common Kiri wood it

* A red petticoat is worn by unmarried girls only.

is made of.* They put the pillow, however, under the Karo's head, who muttered to himself as they did so, as if he were dreaming. Ishi then dismissed the attendants, who, after leaving their respectful duty for the master of the house, and endeavoring, but in vain, by expressive glances to induce Rikiya to return with them, reluctantly withdrew. As soon as the sound of their talking had died away, Yuranoske rose to his feet.

"Rikiya, you see yonder mass of snow I have been amusing myself in heaping up? There was a meaning in it—can you guess what it is?"

"I think I can, father. Snow is so light that the least breeze blows it away in dust; yet when heaped up into a mass, as you have done there, may, in the form of an avalanche rolling down from some mountain-top, crush even huge rocks, just as a boulder might do. So we, too, you would say, though weak individually, may by union become able to destroy even so powerful an enemy as ours. Yet, as that heap of snow in time will melt away, so will our loyalty, however much it may accumulate, if tried too long, melt away. Was not that your meaning, father?"

"Nay, not so," exclaimed the Karo, "we forty-seven plotters, myself, you, and the others, are all masterless men, in the sun of no one's favor. In the shade, that mass of snow would take long enough to melt. Let it be removed, by the by, into the inner court, where the sun's rays cannot beat upon it. As for us, we must persevere and do the best we can, like the sage Sonko, of the old story, who, being so poor that he could not buy oil for his lamp, gathered fire-flies and studied by their light; or that other philosopher, Riuto,† whose poverty compelled him to be content to supply his need with the dim light reflected from a heap of snow."

* For a description of the Japanese pillow see Appendix. The Kiri tree is the Paulownia Imperialis. The wood is soft, light in texture and color, and peculiarly dry.

† Ancient Chinese sages. Some account of them will be found in the Appendix.

"Let yonder mass," he resumed, "be taken at once into the inner court. I must away, and write to Sakai; when the messenger comes let me know."

"Your honor's orders shall be attended to," cried a woman-servant who was standing by.

Yuranoske saw the snow-heap rolled into the inner court, and then, pushing back a partition, betook himself to his cabinet.

Shortly afterwards, there came up to the gate of our hero's hermitage the wife of Kakogawa Honzo, the Karo of Momonoi Wakasanoske. Her name was Tonase, and she had come up to the capital with the object of finding out the retreat of our prudent and sagacious councillor. In her girdle she carried her husband's swords, not unbefittingly, and was accompanied by a *norimon*, which she ordered the bearers to set down by the roadside, while she demanded admission.

A woman-servant, with her sleeves tucked up—in Yuranoske's better days it would have been a lackey—came hurriedly to the gate, exclaiming loudly,

"Who is there? who is there?—one moment."

Immediately afterwards, the gate was thrown open.

"I believe," said Tonase, "this is the dwelling of Yuranoske Sama? If I am right, pray let him know that Tonase, the wife of Kakogawa Honzo, is here. It is long since I had the pleasure of seeing your master, and I should be glad if you would tell him that I have come a great distance in the hope of being allowed an interview with him."

The wife of Honzo then turned to the bearers of the *norimon*, and ordered them to bring their burden up to the gate.

"Come, daughter," she cried, as her order was obeyed, "you can alight now."

Konami, for the occupant of the *norimon* was none other, accordingly stepped forth, with a glad

look in her deep-set eyes, like an oriole breaking forth from her nest, and rejoicing in the vernal blossoming of the plum-trees in the valley below.

"And is this then the home of Sir Rikiya," cried the girl, whose face was concealed by the white head-dress of a bride. "O, mother, how shall I meet him!"—trembling with a pretty confusion as she spoke. The servant, meanwhile, mending a little the disorder that was apparent about the mean entrance, invited the new-comers to follow her within. Tonase, accordingly, having ordered the bearers to return, passed into the house, Konami clinging timidly to her mother's arm.

They had hardly seated themselves on the matting when Ishi entered, and greeted her visitors with befitting courtesy.

*Ishi.*—"Welcome, welcome, Tonase Sama, and you too, Konami; this visit is most kind on your part. I ought long since to have presented myself to you, but you doubtless know how we are situated; really, your attention makes me feel quite ashamed of myself."

*Tonase.*—"Pray O-Ishi Sama, do not make such strangers of us. True, we meet each other to-day for the first time, but your son and my daughter were betrothed long ago; we are both of us mothers-in-law, and, I am sure need stand upon no ceremony with each other."

*Ishi.*—"Your kind expressions fill me with confusion. How did you manage to leave your husband, doubtless occupied as usual with his lord's affairs, and journey, this cold weather, all the way to the capital! To you madam, Kioto is probably familiar enough; for your daughter, however, it may have some novelty. She must see the famous Gion street and the temple of Kiyomidsu the great Buddha at Nara, the Hall of Chion, and the temple of Kinkaku.* I have a friend who will be glad to show you the latter place.

The wearer of the bridal head-dress, overwhelmed with timid confusion, could only reply to her

* The "lions" of Kioto, of which a brief description will be found in the Appendix.

hostess' kind address by a faint "ai, ai." Tonase came to her daughter's assistance, exclaiming:

"I ought to explain to you the reason of our visit to-day. After the betrothal of our children, those dreadful calamities overtook your lord Yenya-dono, and your son, together with his father, disappeared, no one knew whither. Ah me! such changes are too common in this world of ours—but my husband's purpose remained still unaltered, and we sought after you everywhere for a long time, but without success. At last we heard you were living here, and as my daughter had arrived at a marriageable age, we were desirous that she should come to you without delay. I trust, therefore, you will not consider us as intruders. My husband intended to have come in person, but could not, and in lieu thereof gave me his two swords, which, as you see, I carry in my girdle, to represent his authority, so that at present I play the part of father as well as that of mother. I should be glad to talk over the matter with your husband, for I am very anxious the marriage should take place. To-day is a lucky day, fortunately, and if you would kindly order the necessary preparations to be made ———"

*Ishi.*—"What you say takes me quite by surprise. Unfortunately, my husband is away just now; if he were at home, I am sure he would thank you most warmly for your kind expressions. But, as you know, when the betrothal took place my husband was high in the favor of our late lord, occupying a very eminent position, and could then well aspire to the hand of your daughter for his son. Now everything is very different; he is but a *rônin*, with hardly a follower to his back, and to ask a gentleman of your husband's rank and position to abide by a promise made when our circumstances were so much better than they are now, and give his daughter to our son, would be an impertinence, as if one were to offer a common paper lantern in exchange for a temple bell. Thus, then, we think the engagement must end. And as the betrothal has not been ratified by the customary exchange of bridal presents, we shall not take it as a slight if your daughter should find a husband elsewhere."

For a few moments Tonase hardly knew what to say, in reply to this unexpected address of her hostess. At last, collecting her thoughts, she exclaimed:

"Indeed, madam, I hardly understand you, but, I can assure you, you are not just to yourself. As to any difference in position between your husband and mine, why, the disadvantage is all on our side. When your husband, as councillor of one of the higher nobles, had appointments of 1500 *koku*, * mine whose lord was only a member of the lower nobility, was allotted 500 *koku* by the year, and no more—1,000 less than what your husband received; yet you never objected to an alliance with us on that score. How, then, can Honzo fling it in your face that Sir Yura, compelled by misfortune to become a *rônin*, has nothing, while my husband has—what? exactly 500 more."

"Iya!" answered Ishi, impatiently, "what you say is not to the purpose. It is not a question of any difference in income of 500; we object to your husband's character and disposition, and we should refuse the daughter of such a man, whatever his wealth or position might be, for our son."

*Tonase.*—"Ho, ho, O-Ishi Sama. I should be glad to know what objection you have to my husband; pray tell me, I am all attention."

*Ishi.*—"Our lord's self-dispatch was brought about by his high spirit, and it was his refusal to humiliate himself that resulted so fatally for his house. Acting on a very different principle, your husband, Honzo, who is unworthy of the name of *samurai*, bribed his master's enemy and fawned upon him most abjectly. Yuranoske does not know how to serve more than one master, and is too proud to accept for his son the hand of the daughter of one who has acted as Honzo has done."

Tonase, starting angrily to her feet, interrupted the wife of the Karo.

* A koku of rice (a little over five bushels) was worth about two-thirds of a sovereign. Hence, 1500 koku would be worth about £1,000. This estimate, however, makes no allowance for the different purchasing values of money in Europe and Japan, under the old régime.

"Unworthy of the name of *Samurai*?—of whom talk you? I refuse to attend to what you are saying; for my daughter's sake I shall pass your insults over, for the side of the wife must always give way to that of the husband. But whether you allow the marriage to be consummated or not, my daughter is your son's wife, before all the world."

"Pfuh!" answered Ishi, "all that is but fine talk; and, at all events, if she is my son's wife, he can put her away at will, and I, his mother, acting for him, do accordingly put her away from this very moment."

And, throwing a scornful glance upon her two visitors, the wife of our hero suddenly pushed back a partition and disappeared, leaving Tonase and her daughter alone.

"O, mother!" cried Konami, bursting into tears, "I had always thought that Rikiya cared for me as I for him, and you promised me that I should be united to him, and—and so I came here with you; never imagining that my mother-in-law would drive me thus cruelly away. Pray, try, mother, to soothe her, and prevent my engagement to Rikiya from being broken off."

The poor girl clung to her mother as she spoke, while the perplexed woman gazed irresolutely upon her child's face, uncertain how to act.

"Perhaps I have been too fond of you, dear," she said at last, "but you always seemed to me to possess in yourself more attractions both of person and mind than any ten girls; and so I sought anxiously for a good husband for you, and, thinking I had found one in Rikiya, I caused you to be betrothed to him. His mother cannot put you away without his consent; no mother-in-law can do such a thing, the notion is preposterous. Ishi's conduct is quite inexplicable to me. Perhaps it is that, *rônin* as they are now, they are at their wits' end to support themselves, and so have hit upon marrying their son to some rich citizen's daughter, exchanging their good blood for money, and shamelessly breaking their faith with us. Daughter, when such people reject you, you can throw the insult back in their

faces. There are plenty of families who will be glad enough to receive you as a bride—why should you not marry elsewhere? My child, don't weep; bear up in spite of everything and answer me bravely, answer me bravely. Speak to me, if only a word."

Overcome by her feelings, Tonase looked distressfully at her daughter, awaiting a reply.

"Mother, mother," cried the latter, after a pause, "you are cruel to me. When we left home my father told me that I was most fortunate in meeting with such a husband as Ohoboshi Rikiya, who though a *ronin*, was of excellent parts and elegant manners. He said that no proper-minded girl could devote herself to a husband more than once, and enjoined me never to marry a second one if circumstances should separate Rikiya and myself, for no married woman ought to think of such a thing. Above all, sleeping or waking, I was not to forget a tittle of my duty to my husband, and never to omit to treat my parents-in-law with the utmost respect and tenderness. 'Always cherish your husband most dearly,' he said, 'never show a jealous disposition even by way of joke; and if you should become in a condition to make me anxious, do not conceal it, but let me know the moment you are yourself aware of it, that you are after the manner of women.' I recollect my father's very words. If I am put away I cannot help it, but I will not add grief upon grief to my father, come what may, say what you will, mother, by becoming the wife of any one but Rikiya."

As Konami concluded, her mother felt her heart swell almost to bursting, with affectionate sympathy for the discarded girl, and, unable to restrain her emotion, gave vent to it in a flood of tears, in the midst of which, prompted by a sudden feeling of desperation, she unsheathed one of the swords she carried in her girdle, and was about to pierce her throat with its point, when Konami, aghast at the action, seized her mother's arm, exclaiming:

"Hold! mother—what would you do?"

"What would I do?" cried Tonase, "what else is left for me to do? As you said a little while

since, your father is anxious that your marriage with Rikiya should be concluded, desirous, as fathers are, of looking upon the face of his first grandchild, and of being indulgent to his daughter, and now the marriage is become an impossibility; you are rejected and I shall have to take you back home,—how shall I show my face to your father, and tell him you have been driven away? I do not know what to do or where to turn for help. And the truth is, you are not my own child, but your father's daughter by a former wife, and it will be said that I have ill played the part of a mother towards you, and have taken no pains to ensure your happiness. What have I to live for?—let me die, let me die, and let your father know afterwards why I sought death."

"No, no, mother," cried Konami, "'tis not you, but I, who am hated by my husband, who ought to die. Alive, I am but a trouble both to my father and to you, and cause nothing but grief, unfilial wretch that I am! Mother, take my life, I beseech you; I would fain die here on the threshold of the house from which I am driven away,—quick, mother, do not delay!"

"Well said, daughter!" exclaimed Tonase, "you have a brave heart, but you shall not die alone. I, too, will cross the Sandsu stream;* your mother will do as you bid her, but will not be long after you. Are you ready, daughter?"—restraining her tears with splendid fortitude, and preparing to give the fatal stroke.

The shrill notes of a pipe arrested her hand. "Ha!" she cried, "did you hear that, daughter? 'Tis some beggar, I suppose, and the air is that of the 'Crane and her little ones.'† Ah, me! though only a bird, she loves her offspring. What a terrible fate is mine—that I should have to take the life of my innocent child!"

Distracted with grief, Tonase could with difficulty stand firm, while with trembling hand she raised the blade aloft under which Konami, kneeling on the ground with a resolute expression, repeated, with

* The Japanese Styx. † Referring to a popular song, so called.

clasped hands, 'Namu-amida Butsu,' and calmly awaited the death-stroke. Ere the blow descended, a voice called out loudly, "enough."

Astonished at this unexpected interruption, Tonase looked round irresolutely. Her grasp on the fatal weapon relaxed, and she allowed the point to fall downwards. Ere long, the sound of the pipe ceased.

"Ha! the beggar is being dismissed. Would that some help came to us; but courage, daughter, we must not let our resolution falter, however much we may be interrupted, or the whole world will laugh at us as a pair of cowards."

"Are you quite prepared?" she resumed, after a pause, raising the weapon a second time.

She was on the point of delivering the blow, when the voice repeated in a loud tone, "Enough!"

"What can this mean?" exclaimed Tonase, in perplexity. "Is it merely some beggar being dismissed with alms, or is it intended to stay my hand?"

"Iya!" exclaimed another voice, from the adjoining room, which Tonase recognized as coming from Ishi—"it is to stay your hand; my son Rikiya shall marry your daughter."

"Yeh!" cried Tonase, in a tone of astonishment. "Whose voice is that? Can it be yours O-Ishi Sama? Oh, madam, are you in earnest?"

The answer was in the words of the old song:

'On Takasago's lonely shore
Two ancient pine trees stand;
Whose branches lovingly meet o'er
The wide enshadow'd strand.'

Presently Ishi entered the room, carrying a small white-wood stand, which she lifted courteously to her forehead.

"I saw you were thoroughly in earnest, Tonase Sama," said the wife of Yuranoske, "in your purpose of taking the life of this young lady, your only daughter—for such she is in effect, if not in blood—whose modest behavior has called forth my admiration as much as her unfortunate position has excited my compassion. This marriage, distasteful though it is to me, shall take place. In return, I must ask for a bridal gift of a very different kind from what is commonly bestowed on such an occasion as the present. And I have brought this stand for you to place it on"—setting the stand down on the matting before her guest, who, after some hesitation, returned her sword to its scabbard with an expression of relief.

"Your wish shall be gratified, lady," replied Tonase, after a slight pause, "this pair of swords I carry in my girdle are heirlooms in my husband's family. The long one is the workmanship of the famous swordsmith Masamune,* the short one is the handiwork of the equally celebrated maker Yukiyasu ; † there is nothing, believe me, my husband values more highly." . . . .

"You are laughing at us *rônin*," interrupted Ishi, "with your precious swords. Are we to sell them to supply our needs? No, no, that is not the bridal gift I want from you."

"Then, pray, lady, what is it that will satisfy you."

"The head of Kakogawa Honzo, placed upon this stand—that will satisfy me," cried Ishi.

"The head of Honzo?" exclaimed Tonase, in astonishment.

"Yes," replied Ishi. "When our lord, the Baron Yenya, in his high-spirited eagerness to revenge himself upon Moronawo, drew his sword upon his enemy within the palace at Kamakura, your husband, whom luck would have present, threw himself upon our lord and prevented him from fully satisfy-

* Masamune flourished about the end of the 13th century. A very cleverly written and interesting essay on "The Sword of Japan," by T. H. R. McClatchie, Esq., of H. B. M.'s Legation, will be found in the Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan, from October, 1873, to July, 1874.

† His full name was Nami-no-hira Yukiyasu.

ing his wrath, so that the destroyer of our house got off with no more than a slight scratch. None can tell how terribly the recollection of his unfulfilled vengeance embittered the last moments of our lord! Though no word could pass his lips, well we knew how great was his agony, and how intense was the hatred he felt for your husband, as the shades of death were closing in around him. We are still liegemen of our ill-fated chief; if you would that the daughter of Honzo become the wife of our son, you must present us with your husband's head on this stand; if you would not willingly be separated from him, with both your heads. As we shall have feasted our eyes on this sight, the marriage shall take place without further delay. Sah, sah; what say you—yea or nay? yea or nay?"

Confounded by Ishi's sneering tone and strange request, mother and child hung their heads in confusion, unable to utter a word. In the midst of their terrible perplexity, a voice, apparently that of the beggar, was heard, exclaiming loudly:

"'Tis the head of Kakogawa Honzo you demand—here it is, take it."

As the words were said, the beggar presented himself, and, throwing off his deep-brimmed hat revealed the features of Kakogawa Honzo.

"Yah!" exclaimed Tonase, in astonishment, "it is your father! Honzo, husband, what means this disguise? Why have you come here? Tell me"——

"A truce to your chatter," interrupted Honzo. "I have heard all that has passed. I came here, secretly, for a special purpose, of which more anon—for the present forbear from questioning me."

"And so," resumed the Karo of Momonoi, addressing Ishi, "you, lady, are the wife of Yuranoske Sama. I foresaw matters would take this turn, and, therefore, without saying a word to wife or child, I came here to see for myself whether the state of things was such as I anticipated; nor have I been disappointed. And now you would have my head. Ha! ha! that *you* should harbor such a wish is laughable enough. Why, your husband, lost in dissipation and enervated by debauchery, has become

an imbecile, and must have quite given up the idea of revenging his chief's death, which no true *samurai* would ever cease to cherish. Abandoned wretch! Yura is a perfect model of a spiritless lout. And as a frog's spawn can only be expected to produce frogs, doubtless Rikiya is not far behind his father in imbecility and cowardice. Do you think my neck is in any danger from the blunt-edged swords of *samurai* of that stamp? Pshaw! dismiss the silly thought from your mind!"

Setting his foot upon the stand, as he concluded this insulting speech, the Karo of Momonoi broke it to pieces.

"Pick up the bits," he resumed, in a sneering tone, "and throw them away, you pretentious woman."

"Ah!" interrupted Ishi, "you are insolent, sir; we will see whether the sword of a *ronin*, unused though it be, is not keen enough to strike the head off you shoulders. The wife of Yuranoske, awkward as she may be in handling a weapon, is willing to try her skill with you. You cannot at least refuse her as an antagonist, so defend yourself, defend yourself"—gathering up her dress as she spoke, and snatching a spear from the wall, with which she made a hurried thrust at Honzo. At this sight Konami and Tonase started back in affright, and threw themselves upon Honzo, who cast them off with an angry exclamation, and, seizing the spear close to the point, twisted it away from his body. Ishi, placing her feet firmly together, endeavored to force the spear out of her adversary's hand, but the latter, giving the weapon a sudden kick with his foot, caused it to fly into the air. Without troubling himself further about the spear, Honzo next seized Ishi by her dress and threw her on the ground. This done, the dexterous Karo set his knee upon the prostrate form of the wife of Yuranoske, who gnashed her teeth in the extremity of her rage.

The wife and daughter of Honzo looked on in fear and distress, not knowing what to do.

At this juncture Rikiya unexpectedly presented himself, and seeing at a glance how matters stood,

seized the spear which was lying on the ground, and, without a moment's hesitation, ran Honzo with it through the chest. The latter uttered a deep groan and fell heavily to the ground, while his wife and daughter, their eyes blind with tears, caught hold of Rikiya and implored mercy.

Just then, Yuranoske came upon the scene, and, seizing his son's arm, cried hurriedly:

"Yah! Rikiya, what are you about? You have been overhasty, overhasty."

And turning to the wounded man, the Karo resumed:

"I am rejoiced to see you again, Sir Honzo, after so long an interval. In falling by the hand of your son-in-law, you have, I know, met with the fate you most desired."

As Yuranoske who had divined Honzo's real wishes concluded, the latter opened his eyes exclaiming:

"I knew from the first that you had never swerved fron your purpose of avenging your chief's death, and that your seeming dissipation was a mere device to throw Moronawo off his guard, while you collected your band together. Ah me! would that I had acted as you are now acting. At the inauguration at Tsurugaoko, last spring, my lord Momonoi was publicly affronted by Moronawo, and, writhing under the insult, sent for me. After much angry talk, he declared that, the next day, he would throw himself upon his enemy and slay him within the very precincts of the palace; and I could see from the expression of his face that my youthful and headstrong chief was not to be moved from his determination. Now, I knew that Moronawo's treatment of my master was due to the fact that the latter, who was a member of the lower nobility only, had made but a trifling present upon receiving his appointment; and, accordingly, without consulting my lord, I went to Moronawo and, though sorely against my will, presented him with gold and silver coins, silks, and lacquered-ware more than enough. Thus I got my lord out of what seemed to me a great peril, by bribing—for what I did was nothing else—his powerful adversary, who, on next meeting the chief of our clan, made proper apologies for his insolent conduct; so that all thought of revenge had to be dismissed from my lord's mind, and he was forced to let his anger

be appeased. It happened otherwise with my lord's colleague, Yenya Sama, whom I prevented from slaying his antagonist because I thought that by doing so I might render self-dispatch unnecessary. In this I erred grievously, and, ever since, I have never ceased to repent of the fault I then committed, and of which my daughter's present wretched condition is one of the consequences. As an atonement, I have travelled here to offer my gray head to my daughter's betrothed. I sent on my wife and daughter in advance, and, after fully confessing how I had bribed Moronawo, obtained leave from my lord, and, journeying hitherwards by a different road from that which these women followed, arrived two days before them. I had learned to play on the pipe in my youth, and I now found the knowledge of use. After arriving here, I hung about the neighborhood for four days, and thoroughly penetrated your designs. It then seemed to me that if I fell by your hand your hatred of me would cease, and you would consent to the union of my daughter with your son. If that hope should be realized I shall be infinitely grateful to you for all time to come, and most earnestly do I implore you not to make my journey fruitless. When I failed in my duty as a loyal retainer, I did not, it is true, quit life as I ought to have done, but now I abandon life for my child's sake. Sir Yura, you cannot refuse to comply with the last prayer of a father." Choked by his tears, the wounded man could utter nothing more, while his wife and daughter, overwhelmed at the terrible sight, could only repeat mournfully :

"Alas, alas, how could we foresee this! 'Tis, our delay, husband, father, that has resulted thus miserably! How terrible to know that our cowardice has been the cause of your death—pardon, pardon!"

With these words the two women threw themselves at the feet of the dying man, while Yuranoske, with his wife and son, stood by, speechless with horror at the frightful scene.

At last, Yuranoske found utterance. "Honzo-dono, we are told that the superior man hates the crime and not the criminal." *

* A quotation from the analects of Confucius.

"Your desire to form alliance with us and our repugnance to it are not matters to be talked of at the same moment; it is true that we disliked you, but now, as you are not long for this world, I will lay bare to you my most secret thought." Pushing back, as he spoke, the sliding windows of the room, which looked upon the inner court, the Karo displayed to the dying man's view two tombs of snow, fashioned with ornaments depending from each of the five corners of the entablature, and thus revealing the future, showed what the final result of his design would surely be. Tonase at once comprehended him.

"Ah!" she cried, "they will slay their chief's enemy, but will serve no second lord; they will perish, as yonder snow will perish, rather than prove disloyal to the memory of Yenya Dono. It was with such a thought in his heart that Rikiya sought to put away my daughter, not from harshness but out of a most tender compassion. O-Ishi Sama, I would fain recall the wrathful words I have spoken to you."

"Ah! Tonase Sama," cried Ishi, sadly, "there will be none of that married happiness you hoped to see, that was to last forever.* To receive a bride so soon to become a widow—can a more miserable mockery of joy be conceived! How cruel you must have thought me when, with assumed roughness, I told you the marriage was impossible."

"Nay," exclaimed the mother of Konami, "you have nothing to reproach yourselves with; but I, when I recollect how you must have overheard me telling Konami that you were seeking for some rich citizen's daughter as a bride for your son, breaking the faith you had plighted to us, I am so penetrated with shame and distress that I hardly dare lift my eyes to you, O-Ishi Sama."

"Your daughter, Tonase Sama, in birth and beauty is all that we could desire in a bride for our son; alas, under what evil destiny has she been born!"

* Lit. "for eight centuries."

Ishi's tears checked her further utterance.

Honzo, mastering his emotion, exclaimed:

"Now that my dearest hopes approach fulfilment, I can die happy. The devotion of Goshisho,* who received with a smile the news of his disgrace by the King of Go for the loyal advice he had tendered, is less admirable than the rare fidelity of Ohoboshi, who will henceforth be cited throughout all Japan as a mirror of loyalty to succeeding generations, with a pride equal to that with which China has for so many ages boasted of her hero Yojo.† In becoming your wife, Sir Rikiya, worthy son of such a father, my daughter is a hundred times more fortunate than if she were chosen as the bride of an emperor. To you, the betrothed of my daughter,—the most honored in being thus accepted by you among the daughters of *samurai* —I crave leave to present the bridal gifts of which this is a list." And drawing a folded paper from his bosom, the dying Karo gave it to Rikiya.

"Kowa!" cried the latter, in some astonishment, as he unfolded the paper, after having lifted it courteously to his forehead—"this is no list of gifts, it is a detailed plan of Moronawo's castle; porch, barracks, quarters, water-gate, magazines, down to the very store-rooms; every portion is minutely delineated."

"Hah!" exclaimed the Karo of Yenya, delightedly, as he snatched the paper from his son's hands, "a thousand thanks, a thousand thanks. This is just what I was in need of. For some time past we have been all prepared, but for lack of a guide like this could not advance a step in our enterprise. This plan will be to us as the secret books of Son and Go;‡ will be our *Six Steps and Three Methods.*" §

As Ohoboshi concluded, he exchanged a look of satisfaction with his son, but Honzo, who had listened attentively to what had passed, exclaimed:

* An ancient Chinese sage, minister of the King of Wu, the story of whose devotion will be found in the Appendix.

† See Appendix. ‡ Ancient Chinese writers on military tactics. § An old Chinese work on the art of war.

"Nay, nay, your attack must not be made in that manner. Moronawo is a most cautious man, and every shutter and slide in his castle is well furnished with bolts and bars and inside fastenings. You cannot prize them open, and to break them open with mallets would, I need hardly remind you, make far too much noise."

"True," cried Yuranoske; "but I have provided for that. They say that too much pondering over a difficulty makes it harder than ever to get over, and it was, accordingly, on my return from amusing myself at the tea-house that the sight of the bamboos yonder in the courtyard, bending under their load of snow, suddenly suggested to me the plan I shall adopt of forcing open the shutters. I will now explain what that plan is."

So saying, the Karo descended into the courtyard, and going close up to a bamboo bending under a heavy mass of snow accumulated on its branches, called Honzo's attention to it:

"This bamboo, you see, is weighed down by its load of snow. I shall procure a number of bows, and, after bending them in like manner by stringing them, I shall cause their ends to be inserted into the upper and lower grooves in which the shutters slide. Next, upon a given signal, all the strings will be cut through, and the bows suddenly straightening themselves—thus," shaking off the snow from the bamboo, which, relieved of its burden, immediately resumed its natural position, "will prize up the long upper beam, so that the shutters will all fall outwards with a clatter, and we can rush in upon our enemy in the confusion."

The wounded man, delighted with the device, for a moment forgot his condition.

"Good, good," he cried, at length. "How could the Baron Yenya, miserable man, be so shallow-minded* as not to have applied to you in his difficulties to a retainer so fertile in stratagems, so loyal of heart."

* There is here in the original an untranslatable pun, based upon the name of the real personage of whom Yenya is the fictitious representative. The pun is explained in the Appendix.

The complaint of Honzo recalled to the memory of the Karo all the terrible calamities that the high spirit of his dead chief had brought about, and his heart nigh burst with grief and vexation, while tears of rage filled his eyes as he felt within him a strength of loyal devotion that would have borne him to sure victory over his lord's enemies in the battle-field, that would have laughed at even a sevenfold gate between him and the foes of his chief. Meanwhile Rikiya knelt respectfully before his father, exclaiming:

"Now that by the aid of Honzo-dono we are in possession of a guide-plan of our enemy's castle, ought we not to send word to the arms-merchant, Gihei, of the Amagawa house at Sakai in Senshiu, to prepare for our coming, and at the same time put ourselves in readiness to depart hence?"

"No, no," interrupted his father, "if we all assemble here at Yamashina, where every one knows I am living, we shall excite suspicion. I shall myself go to Sakai,* and from that place we shall make our start, as soon after my arrival there as possible. You, meanwhile, with your mother, your bride, and her parents, can remain behind, and see that nothing goes wrong—you will remember to be careful, —and you know you will have this night to yourself, and can follow me by boat to-morrow. Honzo's disguise fortunately is here; I shall make use of it."

Throwing the Komuso's scarf over his shoulder, and putting on his head the deep-brimmed bamboo hat that Honzo had thrown away, the Karo had all the appearance of a mendicant asking for alms.

"For this night," continued the Karo, anxious that the spirit of Honzo should not be disappointed in the world into which it was passing, "you, Konami and Rikiya, are man and wife, thanks to your father's devotion"—and, whistling on his pipe, the pretended Komuso prepared to depart. His wife, with a heart almost too full for utterance, wished him, sadly enough, a successful issue to his enterprise.

Honzo was rapidly sinking.

* Sakai being a sea-port, no suspicion would be excited by a reunion of the conspirators in a place of such general resort.

"Father, father," cried Tonase and her daughter together, but no answer came from the dying man's lips. The moment of death was at hand, the moment of parting from his wife and daughter, whom he had so tenderly loved; the thread* of his existence was snapped in twain, and Kakogawa Honzo was no more.

Overwhelmed with grief, the widow and orphan knelt by the corpse, and began to recite the prayers for the dead.

"*Namu amida butsu, namu amida butsu,*" repeated Yuranoske solemnly after them, as he passed forth into the world.

Such was to be the bridal night of Konami and Rikiya, the first and last they were to pass together as man and wife. To them it would be as the last night of the year, when the hundred and eight lusts and cares of the world are banished from the soul, as the mass is said, and the prayers offered up, and the bell struck for the dead.

* See Appendix.

End of Book IX.

## BOOK THE TENTH.

### The Proof of Gihei.

AND so muttering to himself, Ryochiku went away.*

It was past the hour of the hog,† and the night was dark, the moon being hidden by clouds, when a patrol of several men, iron mace and bundle of cord in hand,‡ and darkened lantern hanging at hip, crept slowly along one of the streets of Sakai, scanning each house closely as they advanced. One of the number went in front, like the dog scenting game for the hunter. Him the one who seemed to be chief of the patrol motioned to approach, and, as the former obeyed, whispered a word or two in his ear, to which the man immediately nodded an assent.

The party then stopped before a certain house, at the door of which the one who acted as scout began to knock vigorously.

"Who is there—who is that?" cried a man's voice from within.

* The present book commences thus abruptly in the original. The following pages will make clear who Ryochiku was, and whence he went away.

† About half-an-hour after midnight.

‡ Usually carried, for obvious purposes, by policemen.

"Iya!" said the chief of the party. "I am master of the ship that arrived this evening. There is some error about the freight—let me in, I must have a word with you."

"You're making a mighty fuss," answered the voice, "about what is a small matter enough, I dare say. Can't you let it rest till the morning?"

"Why, no," said the first speaker, "the ship ought to get her permit to-night, and the account must be settled before she goes away."

Fearing lest the loud tone in which his interlocutor spoke should awaken his neighbors, the man of the house came to the door, and opened it, utterly unsuspicious of any trickery.

Hardly, however, had he pushed the door back, when two of the patrol threw themselves upon him, exclaiming:

"You are our prisoner! Do not attempt to move—we arrest you by authority!"

The remainder of the patrol then closed round their prey, and dragged him into the house.

"Kowa!" cried the prisoner, throwing his eyes round him in amazement. "What means all this?"

"What means this? Darest thou ask, villain!" exclaimed the chief of the patrol. "Thou art Gihei, art thou not—living at the sign of the Amagawa,* in this town of Sakai,†—and, by order of Yuranoske, a *kerai* of the late Yenya Hang'wan, hast got ready for him a quantity of arms and horse-gear enough to load a good sized ship with; which thou art about to send at one dispatch to Kamakura. Thou'lt confess it all, no doubt, under the preliminary torture we are ordered to put thee to. Ha! Would'st escape? Bind him, men, bind him fast!"

"This is a strange charge, sirs!" cried Gihei, for the prisoner was none other. "I know nothing whatever about what you accuse me of—you must have hit upon the wrong man!"

* Lit. "the heaven stream"—the name given by the Japanese, to the Milky Way.

† A considerable sea-port within a short distance of Ohozaka.

"Yah!" interrupted the chief. "We have indisputable proof of what we allege. Now, men!"

Upon this, his subordinates produced what seemed to be a kind of travelling-box wrapped in matting, at the sight of which Gihei appeared somewhat disturbed.

"Do not stir, you, there!" cried the chief to him, while the man who had acted as scout rapidly undid the covering of the trunk, and was commencing to open it, when Gihei, freeing himself from his captor's grasp by a sudden effort, kicked the fellow aside, and, leaping upon the lid, took up a firm position.

"Yah, you ill-mannered boors!" he cried. "This trunk is full of articles ordered by a noble lady, the wife of a nobleman of high rank. It is an armor-box, containing various small things and *warai** books and objects, together with the letter ordering them all. If you open it, the name of a most illustrious and noble house will become public; and you must take the consequences upon yourselves, if you persist in disclosing it!"

"Ah! a likely story," exclaimed the chief. "You had better confess the truth, without further trouble. You won't? Good!"

"You know what you have to do," added the chief, addressing one of his followers, who, with a gesture of assent, immediately left the room, and returned, after a few moments' absence, dragging in with him a child, a little over a year old, the only son of Gihei, and called Yoshimatsu.

"And now, Gihei," resumed the chief, "for the moment we won't trouble ourselves about the contents of yonder box. You know that Yuranoske and the other *ronin* of Yenya's following have got up a plot against the life of Moronawo, of the details of which you cannot be ignorant. Reveal them to us and all will be well; refuse, and your boy here—you shall see what his fate will be." Drawing his sword as he uttered the last words, the speaker placed the point against the child's throat.

* See Appendix.

Gihei looked on unmoved, and said, scornfully,

"Do you think you have to do with a woman or a child, that you hope to terrify me into making some confession by threatening me through the boy? You will find no coward in Gihei of the sign of the Amagawa. Do your worst. I can't confess what I don't know, and I tell you I know nothing, nothing whatever, if I am to go down to the lowest pit of hell the next moment, of what you have been alleging. If, however, you are simply enemies of mine, my boy there is in your hands, and if you choose to kill him I cannot help it!"

"Faith!" cried the chief, admiringly, "you're a stout-hearted fellow enough! Why, yonder chest contains spears, matchlocks, suits of chain-armor, etc., together with some forty or more devices for the use of the conspirators against Moronawo—and you dare to tell us you know nothing about all this! You would do better to end such talk, and make a clean breast of the whole matter. If you don't, you will be killed by inches; hewed at, until your body is hewed into shreds. How like you that?"

"Do not think you frighten me," cried Gihei, "with your threats. I deal not in weapons and armor only, but also in *yeboshi* caps for court and feudal nobles, in all sorts of things, in fact, down to straw sandals for servant lads and wenches. If you see anything unusual enough in that to need inquiry, everybody in Japan will be pestered out of their lives. If one is to be hewed in pieces, or scourged with the three-fold cat, for following a trade, why, life is not worth having. Slay me, then; thrust your sword through the child's throat! Why don't you set to work upon me? Where would you like to begin—hew off my arm, or tear open my chest, or slash me on the shoulder or on the back?" *

* Allusion is here made to the practice of hacking at the dead bodies of criminals, by which the young *samourai* was wont to perfect himself in swordsmanship, under the old order of things. Treatises exist upon this repulsive art—for an art it seems to have been considered—and one of the commonest of picture-rolls used to represent the various cuts, distinguished by

As he uttered the last words, Gihei, quitting his position on the chest, made a sudden rush upon his captors, and snatched the child from their grasp.

"You shall see," he cried, defiantly, "how far your threats are likely to influence me!"

The firm expression of his face showed that he would not recoil from any extremity, and he seemed on the point of strangling his own child, when the lid of the chest was thrown open, and Yuranoske, who had lain concealed in it, stepped suddenly forth.

"Yah!" cried the Karo, "hold your hand, Gihei, hold your hand!"

Filled with astonishment at this unlooked-for appearance, Gihei neither moved nor spoke, while the chief and the other members of the seeming patrol threw away their maces and bundles of cords, and, taking up a position at a little distance from their captive, assumed a respectful attitude. The Karo of Yenya, with a dignified and grave air, then advanced a step forward, and prostrated himself before the wondering Gihei, exclaiming:

"Sir, I hardly know how to express my admiration for you. Your devotion marks you out among the mass of men, as the brilliance of its flower reveals the lotus in the muddy marsh; as its glitter shows the grain of gold in the sand of the sea-shore. For my part, I knew well how loyal a heart was yours. The Karo of Yenya never for a moment doubted your fidelity, but to my comrades here you were a stranger, and some among them thought that, since you were a *chonin*,* your fidelity ought to be

special names, by practising which the aspirant could best learn on the dead subject to qualify himself for mangling the living one.

* There were two main divisions of society—excluding the priestly class—in old Japan, the lines of demarcation between which are still far from being obliterated. These were the *Bushi* or *Samourai* (lit. "warriors" or "retainers"), originating in the soldier of the early days of the Shogunate; and the *Chonin* (lit. "street people"), or citizens, artisans, and peasants. The first class had the right of wearing *hakama* (a species of wide, loose trowser), and of carrying two swords, a short one

proved; and would not rest until it was settled that you were to be seized, and your loyalty tried, by taking advantage of a father's natural love for his child, and putting you to the proof—by threatening the life of your darling and only boy, unless you divulged our secrets. To show my comrades how brave and true a heart yours was, and to put these companions of mine at their ease, I have joined in the proof, though I knew what a cruel trial it would be to you. And now I do most humbly crave your pardon for what you have been made to suffer. They say that we *Bushi* are the bloom* of mankind, but never, has any *Samourai* equalled you in generous devotion, and the hero who should withstand the onset of a thousand foes would display a courage inferior to what you have just revealed. Would that we could borrow your brave heart! With your noble conduct as our model, could we possibly fail in fulfilling our vengeance upon our enemy; even though he should betake himself to some precipice-fenced fastness in the mountains; or should enclose himself within walls of iron and brass! Among men, true men are scarce, they say. Those that exist, it would seem, must be sought for among the ranks of the *Chonin*. For what you have done for us, if we did not bow down before you with reverent thanks, as before our village and household Gods,† we should be wanting in gratitude to you for the favor you have shown us 'Tis in the hour of need that the hero reveals himself. Our lord, who is no more—alas, alas, how sad, how pitiable his fate!—had he known your true and valiant heart, would have advanced you to high military and civil rank,‡ and never would have repented him of his bounty. The eyes of my companions were blinded, as it were, to your worth; the courage you have displayed this night has acted like some infallible specific of some famous doctor, and they can now recognize your high qualities, thankful that you have caused the scales to fall from their eyes."

and a long one, in their girdles; the latter could only wear one short sword, and the ordinary *kimono*, resembling a dressing-gown, with hanging sleeves.

* Lit. "the wild-cherry blossom." † See Appendix. ‡ See Appendix.

Yuranoske and his fellows then withdrew a little, thrice bowing their heads to the matting, and exclaiming:

"We humbly crave your pardon, sir, for our violence."

"Nay, sirs," cried Gihei, "I have done nothing to merit the honors you heap upon me; pray rise. The proverb says, 'Judge a man as you do a horse—after you've tried him.' And seeing that I was unfortunate enough to be unknown to you, it was necessary that you should put me to some proof. Of old, my position was a mean one enough, but since I have had the honor of transacting the business of your lord's clan, things have gone well with me."

"When I heard of the calamities that befell your noble chief, I shared your terrible distress. I racked my brains to devise some plan of exacting vengeance upon your lord's enemy, but with no more success than a tortoise might hope for, trying to strut,* like an actor, upon its hind legs. It was then that his honor here, Yuranoske, came to me, and I did my best, without troubling my head about the consequences, to obey the commands I was favored with. Oh, that I were not a mere *chonin!* If I were a samourai, were my rations no more than a handful of rice a day, I might have asked to be one of you, following humbly after you † in your enterprise. I should have been content if I could only have been allowed to bring you refreshment when wearied, but it could not be, mean *chonin*, O, how mean! as I am; while you, sirs, by the favor of your lord, enjoy the distinction of wearing swords, and are permitted to devote your lives to his memory,—would that a like fortune were mine! At least, when in attendance upon your lord upon the dark path, you will not fail to let him know how gladly the fellow, Gihei, would have accompanied you!"

The companions of Yuranoske, deeply moved by these earnest words, burst into tears, and ground

* Lit., "strut about," with the conventional, and, to Europeans, ridiculous gestures of a Japanese tragedian.

† Lit., "following close at your sleeves, and at the hem of your garments."

their teeth in sympathetic rage, as they saw how bitter was the distress of Gihei at finding himself unable to give full vent to his loyal feelings. The Karo, however, restrained himself, and immediately addressed Gihei, as follows:

"We shall leave for Kamakura to-night, and, ere long,* we hope to have achieved success. They tell me that you have gone so far as to send your wife away, in your care to preserve our secret. 'Twas well thought of, but you shall endure the discomfort of separation from her for a short time only; she shall soon be called home again. And now I must say farewell."

"But let me wish you a fortunate issue to your undertaking in a cup of *sake*, ere you start, sirs," cried Gihei, as Yuranoske prepared to depart.

"Nay, we must"—

"Pray do not refuse me; here is hand-struck buckwheat dough, it will bring you luck."

"Hand-struck † is it? Well, it may bring luck, as you say," cried Yuranoske. "Ohowashi and Yazama," resumed the Karo, turning to his companions, "you two can remain with me; the rest of you may depart, and, picking up Goyeimon and Rikiya on your way, get forward as far as Sadanomori."

"Will your honor please to come this way," said Gihei to Yuranoske and the two men who remained with him, after the rest had left.

"It would be rude to refuse you," answered Yuranoske, as, together with Ohowashi and Yazama, he followed his host into an inner room.

About this time, a woman came up to the house—Sono the wife of Gihei; who, either at the instance of her father Ryochiku, or by the will of her husband,—she knew no more which, than whether the

* Lit. "not, more than 100 days."

† The Japanese word translated, 'hand-struck,' means also an attack or encounter.

darkness in which she was enveloped was caused by the moon having set or not having yet risen- -had been thrust out of doors.*

She was alone, and carried a small lantern in her hand, and as she knocked at the door she trembled with fear, confused with the pitch darkness and full of anxiety about her child.

"Igo, Igo," she cried, after having knocked several times, "are you there?"

"What's that," muttered the servant-lad from within, in a sleepy tone, as he stumbled up out of bed, only half awake. "What's that calling me—some wandering spirit or tricky goblin or other?"

"Iya, no. It is I, Sono, your mistress; open the door, quick."

"Ah, but in spite of what you say I am rather frightened; you must not shout at me if I let you in," cried the lad, opening the door as he spoke.

"Yeh!" he exclaimed, delightedly, as he saw Sono. "It is the mistress; I am so glad to see you back. Why, you are all alone—you might have got bitten by some wild-dog."

"I might as well be, and die from the bite," said Sono, bitterly. "I can no longer endure this misery—banished from my own house."

"I don't understand you."

"Is my husband asleep just now?"

"No."

"Is he out?"

"No."

"Well, then, where is he; what is he doing?"

"I am sure I don't know. Just after nightfall, a lot of men came up here, shouting "caught,

* The portion of the text here translated is extremely obscure, and an imitation, rather than an exact rendering of the original, is all that has been attempted.

caught," as a cat might do that had just got hold of a rat; and when I heard the noise I covered my head with the bed-clothes and went to sleep. The men are now in the house drinking *sake* and enjoying themselves."

"Strange! I wonder what my husband has in hand," said Sono, half to herself.

"And baby," she added, addressing the lad, "is he asleep?"

"Ay, he is fast asleep enough."

"Has he been sleeping with his father."

"No."

"With you, then?"

"No, all alone; rolled up by himself."

"Why, hasn't he been nursed to sleep, then?"

"No, master tried, and so did I, but we could not give him any milk, and so he did nothing but cry all the time."

"Poor little fellow," cried Sono, leaning against the door, and bursting into tears. "Of course, he would cry, what could he do else?" Heaven, however, no more noticed her tears than it regards the patter of rain upon the earth beneath, and her sleeve was soon drenched with the flow.

Gihei, meanwhile, coming from the inner rooms, pushed back a partition-slide.

"Ho, there, Igo, Igo," he shouted, looking round. "Where is the fellow?"

"Here I am, sir," said the lad.

"Blockhead!" cried Gihei, looking aslant at him, with no pleased expression.

"Go and wait upon my guests, yonder."

Storming at the lad, the husband of Sono left the room, and was about to close the slide behind him, when his wife prevented him.

"Husband, husband, do not shut the door; I want so much to speak with you."

"I can neither listen to you nor talk with you. You and your father, I find, are a pair of miserable wretches; away with you," cried Gihei, angrily.

"You take me to be like my father," said Sono, "but I am not; look, this will prove it to you beyond a doubt," throwing a paper through the half-opened door, at her husband's feet, as she spoke.

As Gihei stooped to pick it up, his wife made her way to his side.

"What is this," exclaimed her husband, in a tone of astonishment; "'tis the letter of divorce I wrote some time since; I don't understand your bringing it back."

"You don't understand my bringing it back—how can you say so," cried Sono. "You know well enough how ill-disposed my father, Ryochiku, is towards you.* What could induce you to give that divorce-letter into his hands. As soon as he got back with it he wanted to marry me to some one else, there and then, to my utter astonishment. However, I put a good face on the matter, so as to lull my father's suspicions, and, watching my opportunity, stole the divorce-letter out of his pocket-book and ran back home with it."

* Ryochiku was a doctor, in the service of Kudaiu, and a man of mean and parsimonious character. Dissatisfied with his son-in law, on account of the latter's connection with Yuranoske, as well as by reason of certain pecuniary transactions on the occasion of the marriage, in which the doctor conceived himself to have been ill-treated by Gihei, he had done his best to annul the union with his daughter. Gihei, on the other hand, fearful of Yuranoske's secret being betrayed, through Sono, to Ryochiku, had availed himself of the latter's inclination, and had sent his wife home, under a letter of divorce, which, however, he intended to be of only temporary force; so that she might be out of the way until Yuranoske's designs had been successfully carried out.

Such is the explanation generally given of the conduct of Gihei on this occasion, but in the text followed in the present translation the reader is rather left to infer, than expressly told, by what motives the husband of Sono was actuated.

"Surely you love your child," continued the poor woman, with her tears flowing fast. "How could you be so cruel as to send me away, and let him hang at a foster-mother's breast?"

"Oh!" cried Gihei, "the complaint comes from the wrong side, I think. Did you not heed what I said to you when you left, that I did not send you away for any fault of yours, but simply wished you to stay at your father's for a short time, and could not give you my reasons because he was formerly a follower of Kudain, and I did not know which way his inclinations tended. I told you, too, to feign illness, and to put on an indisposed look night and morning and neglect your hair, so that you might run no risk of being troubled with offers of marriage—for who would think of asking a woman to be his wife who neglected her hair? Why have you disobeyed me? And as to our child, Yoshimatsu, think you that you alone were distressed about him? During the day, that lad Igo could coax and wheedle him into being quiet, but when night came he kept crying out continually for his mother, and however much we tried to pacify him by telling him his mother would be back soon, he would not go to sleep, and we sought to make him, by scolding or slapping him or making faces at him; he did not cry, but whined and moaned so pitifully that I could hardly bear the sight of his misery. I now understood the force of the saying, 'your children will teach you how your parents loved you;' and, remembering how often I had behaved ill to my father and mother, I was filled with remorse, and wept almost the whole night through. Last evening, I several times took up the boy in my arms, with the intention of bringing him to you, and even got as far as the door with him, but recollecting that for you to have him for one night only would be of no use at all, and that I did not know in the least how long you might have to remain away from me, I thought it would make matters worse to take the child to you, and so walked about with him, dandling him and patting him till he at last fell asleep in my arms, when I lay down with him nestled close to me, and rolling his head about as he sought for the breast. I never intended to separate you from your darling for the rest of your life, but only for a short time, and, under

the circumstances, I could not avoid writing the divorce-letter. Your father, Ryochiku, would never forgive me were I mean enough to get back the letter I gave him, in this underhand manner. I cannot receive it, therefore, and you must take it back with you. The gods have decreed our union thus far; we must now be to each other as if the one of us had died." *

As her husband ceased, Sono was silent for a moment. Knowing well the resolution of his character, she feared that he could not be induced to alter his determination, and when at last she found courage to speak, her tone was sad.

"How wretched a fate is mine. If I remain here I am in your way; if I go to my father's house I shall surely be forced to marry again. This misery will kill me! Oh, husband, wont you let Yoshimatsu be awakened, and brought to me for a few moments!"

"Nay," replied Gihei, "to see him for an instant and then to have to leave him would but make the pain of parting from him harder than ever to bear. And now away with you—I have guests here to-night."

"Let me see the child," said the mother, "if only for a moment."

"Come, come," cried Gihei, soothingly, "have a little courage. Did you not hear what I said just now about the harm of seeing him, even for a moment only?"

And putting the letter into his wife's hand, he forced her to the door, and, steeling his heart against her entreaties, pushed her out, exclaiming:

"If you really love your child, return to your father's at once, and get him to afford you hospitality until the spring—when I hope I shall be able to come to some determination."

* In the 10th month of each year, the God Iyahiko is supposed to assemble the eight hundred and more remaining gods at the *yashiro* or shrine near Namiki in Idsumo, where all the varying destinies of men, their deaths, births, marriages, etc., are arranged for the ensuing year. The gods being thus absent from their usual abodes, the 10th month is called, "Kaminadsuki," or "godless month," during which the Japanese avoid forming new connections.

"Ah, if I could only be sure that my father would not force me into marriage with some one, I might bear the parting," cried Sono, from without.

"Cruel husband!" she continued, "to send me away in this manner, who have done nothing wrong —not to let me see my child even. How can you be so hard-hearted."

"I will see him," she added, after a pause. "I won't stir hence till you let me see him." Changing her tone to one of entreaty, she persisted in imploring her husband to admit her, but without success, and, overwhelmed with grief, at last sank down on the ground distractedly, and burst into tears.

"Ah," she cried, after a time, collecting her energies, "I will restrain myself—I will say no more. Let my child but catch one glimpse of me, I know he will cry out "mammy," and cling to me so that none can separate us. If I return to my father's to-night he will force me into a betrothal ere a day passes. Oh, husband, what have I to live for—adieu, husband, adieu forever!"

The wife of Gihei, however, did not at once go away, but kept close to the entrance, hoping to hear her child's voice, or perhaps catch a sight of him through some chink in the door, but there was not a sound in the house.

"Alas, alas," she cried, mournfully, "must I then go without one look at him?"

She turned to depart, when a couple of stout fellows, their faces concealed all but the eyes, suddenly blocked up her path. Ere she could utter a cry, they rushed upon her—was it not outrageous? —and while one of them held her fast, the other gathered her hair (which was dressed Shimada fashion) in his hand, and cut it off close to the roots, deftly possessing himself at the same moment of everything she had in her bosom.

The next instant, the pair had vanished, no one could tell whither,—brutal ruffians they must have been, to attack a woman!

"Ah, wretches," cried Sono—"Ah, villains! What means this violence. You have cut off my

hair and seized the paper I had in my bosom; if you are common thieves * why don't you kill me at once.?"

His manhood † roused by his wife's cry of distress, Gihei could hardly refrain from rushing to her assistance, and the gnashing of his teeth showed the struggle that went on in his breast.

While the husband of Sono stood thus irresolute close to the door, Yuranoske entered from the inner apartments, shouting out loudly for his host. "Ah," cried the Karo, as he caught sight of Gihei, "we are infinitely obliged to you for your kind and courteous hospitality; you shall have news from Kamakura—what other gear we may require I will let you know of by a swift messenger. And now we must bid you farewell—we should be on our way ere dawn breaks."

"Well, sirs," cried Gihei, "this is not an occasion on which I dare detain you; may your journey be a safe one, and may success attend your enterprise."

"As soon as we get to Kamakura, we will send you tidings of us," replied Yura. "Search as we may, we cannot find words in which fitly to express our heartfelt thanks to you for the services you have rendered us."

"Yazama, Ohowashi," continued the Karo, turning to his companions, "present Gihei with the parting gift you have ready for him." The two men immediately stepped forward, one of them bearing an outspread fan, used for the nonce as a presentation-stand, upon which was laid a paper parcel.

"We beg that you, sir," resumed Yuranoske, "and your wife, will deign to accept these trifling gifts from us."

A cloud came over Gihei's countenance. "I should not have put my neck in peril," he cried,

* Lit., "robbers of combs, and hair ornaments."

† See Appendix.

"simply to get a present from you, sirs. You despise me as a mere citizen, and think I shall be pleased by having my mouth filled with gold pieces." *

"Nay, not so," exclaimed Yuranoske. "We are taking the last farewell of you we shall ever take in this world, where the gods have decreed that you should remain, and it is by the desire of the Lady Kawoyo that we lay these poor gifts at your feet."

"It is plain, sirs," exclaimed Gihei, with increased vexation, "that you misjudge me, and treat me with contempt. Your gifts are hateful to me," spurning the fan away from him as he spoke. The paper packet opened out, as it fell to the ground, and its contents escaped. On seeing them, Sono uttered a cry of astonishment.

"Why, these are my comb and hair-ornaments, and my hair that the men cut off just now."

Gihei, meanwhile, had picked up the paper wrapping.

"And this," he exclaimed, "is the letter of divorce I wrote! What is that about some one's hair being cut off," he added, turning to his wife—"whose hair?"

"I will explain," said Yuranoske. "I sent Ohowashi and Yazama here, round by the back of the house, to seize your wife and cut off her hair, so as to make her like a nun, which will prevent her father from forcing her to marry. Ere her hair grows again, I hope we shall have attained the object of our enterprise, and after our vengeance shall have been fully accomplished, you will be re-united—may you live long and happily together! Then you, lady," addressing the wife of Gihei, "can take these ornaments, and, using these tresses as a cushion, dress your hair in the Kogai† fashion—no one happier in the three kingdoms.‡ Only till then will you be, as it were, a nun, and however long it may

* Lit., "by having Koban ears clapped on my cheeks." The Koban was gold coin of an oval shape, and about the size of a human ear, value nearly five shillings.

† In which the hair is kept in place on either side of the head by a comb.

‡ Japan, China, and India.

be ere she be re-united to you, Gihei, we are all sureties for her that she will divulge nothing, and I myself, from the dark path, will act as intermediary in effecting your reunion."

"How can I be sufficiently grateful for the favors heaped upon me," cried Gihei. "Wife, wife, speak your thanks to his honor."

"I can only say that I owe my life to you, sir," said Sono, softly.

"Iya! I deserve no thanks," replied Yuranoske—"none whatever. And were Gihei not a citizen, we should be overjoyed to have him with us. When we determined upon making our attack by night, our good fortune made us choose the name of your house, Amagawa, as our watchword. When we shall be within our enemy's gates, "Ama" will be our sign and "Kawa" our countersign, and as we shout to each other "Ama, there," "Kawa, there," in the struggle, it will be as if Gihei were with us. And the first character of your name means 'rectitude' and the last means 'level'; happy the omen, our difficulties shall be levelled for us, and a complete success achieved! And now, again, farewell." With these words, Yuranoske rose, with his two companions, and the three then took their departure.

The fame of Yuranoske's deeds has come down to posterity. In the loyalty of his heart he found his tactics of Son and Go,* and the double-meaning language of the world tells us in his name how inexhaustible that loyalty was.†

* See page 125.

† I have here rather attempted to render the ideas than the obscure and involved language of the author.

End of the Tenth Book.

# BOOK THE ELEVENTH.

## Retribution.

THAT the soft may overcome the hard, the weak may overcome the strong, was the secret revealed by Sekiko to the hero Choryo.*

Ohoboshi Yuranoske, the liegeman of Yenya Hang'wan Takasada, mindful of this maxim, got together his fellow-plotters, forty odd brave fellows, and, embarking with them on board fishing-

* The tale is as follows. In the reign of the Chinese emperor Riuko, Choryo filled the post of Commander-in-chief. One day, passing over a bridge known as the Bridge of Hi, he met an old man on horseback, who dropped his sandal and somewhat surlily told Choryo to pick it up for him. Though annoyed at the tone in which the request was made, the great man, seeing the age of his interlocutor, complied with it. Thereupon the old fellow told him to be at the bridge at dawn on the fifth day from that, and he would meet with due reward. Choryo accordingly presented himself on the bridge on the fifth day, but was reproached by the old man as being late, and told to come again at the end of another five days—which he did, and again was dismissed in a similar manner and for a similar reason. The third time, Choryo took care to be at the bridge by midnight, and this time was well received by the old man, who bestowed upon him a book treating of the art of war, the Rikuto Sanriyaku (previously mentioned in the 9th Book), and, telling him that he would meet him once more that day seven years, suddenly disappeared. Choryo visited the bridge in the seventh year, but found nothing there but a huge yellow-colored stone, and thus came to know that his mysterious acquaintance was a spirit sent to try his patience and good manners. The name Sekiko is an abbrevation of Kosekiko ("the lord of the yellow-stone"), the appellation by which the seeming old man was afterwards known.

boats, in which they lay concealed under straw mats, started for Cape Inamura, * in the neighborhood of which they hoped to find their landing as little guarded against as their enterprise was unsuspected by their enemy. †

They arrived in safety at Cape Inamura, and as the first boat was brought alongside a huge rock on the beach, Yuranoske leaped ashore followed by Hara Goyemon, after whom came Rikiya, succeeded by Takemori Kitahachi, Katayama Genta, and others. From the next boat there landed in regular order, Kakuyama Magoshichi, Sudagoro Katsuta, Hayami, Tomonori, the famous Katayama Gengo, Ohowashi Bungo, carrying a huge wooden mallet, Yoshida, Ohokazaki, Kodera, and others, Kowase Chiudaiu, holding under his arm a number of small bows, the renowned Ohoboshi Sehei, and others, including the eldest son of Kodera, all men of courage, cool in danger as the mist, Shinoda and Akane, carrying halberds aloft, with Nogawa, armed with a cross-bladed spear, while several men provided with ladders brought up the rear. All wore mantles bearing for devices different letters of the "Iroha"—a different letter for each man. Yuranoske, not in the least dissipated now, ‡ had caused his aide, Yazama, to bring with him a number of eight-foot bamboo poles, for the purpose of putting the plan of forcing open the shutters I have already described, into execution. At a little distance behind his chief, followed, humbly enough, Teraoka Heiyemon. In all, the party consisted of forty-six men, wearing for device each

* Near Kamakura.

† There is here a pun in the original which is not capable of being rendered in the translation. The whole meaning of he passage is however given.

‡ There again occurs one of those *jeux de mots* which the Japanese apparently mistake for wit. There are, however, equally poor, both in conception and application, to be found in Aristophanes, and even in the mouths of Homer's goddesses, as in the speech of Athene, Od. A, 62.

"* * * hoi toson odusao, ZEU."

The last letters of the Iroha or Japanese syllabary form a phrase meaning "not to be overcome by drink."

a letter of the alphabet on their sleeve, chain-armor on their thighs, on their breast the cuirass of loyalty—of a truth, a lesson-book, as it were, of the alphabet* of faithful duty.

"Comrades," cried Yuranoske, turning to his companions, "do not forget the sign and countersign, 'Ama' and 'Kawa' the names of Gihei's house. As has already been settled, Yazama, Senzaki, Kodera, and their party, headed by my son Rikiya, will make their way in by the front gate, while Goyemon, with myself, will force the rear entrance. At the right moment, a loud whistle will be heard—let every one then rush to the attack; there is but one head we have to take."

The men listened respectfully to their chief's command, and as they came in sight of their enemy's castle their eyes were a-blaze with fury, while, filled with hatred of their foe, they separated into two parties, one to attack by the rear, the other by the front gate.

The great lord of Musashi, meanwhile, his suspicions lulled by the account he had received of Yuranoske's dissipated life, spent his time in drinking and debauchery, assisted by the wretch Yakushiji,† whom he had taken into high favor.

On this very night, exhausted by his excesses, the murderer of Yenya had only just fallen asleep when Yuranoske and his party approached the castle. A profound stillness reigned, broken only by the occasional rap-rap of the clappers of the sentinel going his rounds.

The plan of attack having been finally settled between the two parties, Yazama and Senzaki, like a couple of bold fellows as they were, crept up to the front gate, and, peeping through a chink, took a survey of the interior. As soon as the faintness of the sound of the clappers showed that the sentinel or watchman was pretty well at the further end of his round, they caused a ladder to be carefully and

* There are 46 letters in the Japanese syllabary, excluding the final nasal sound.

† One of the commissioners officially present at the *seppuku* of Yenya, described in the 4th Book, who signalized himself by the brutality with which he executed his duty.

noiselessly placed against the wall, and, mounting it rapidly, with the agility of spiders, they presently found themselves on the top. The sound of the clappers now became more distinct, and showed the approach of the sentinel; to elude whose notice they at once dropped to the ground on the inner side. But in vain; the man saw them drop, and uttered an exclamation. Before he could repeat it, however, they rushed upon him, and, throwing him down, bound his arms tightly. "You must guide us, and truly too," they cried, gagging their prisoner as they spoke, and attaching him by a cord to the person of one of them. Seizing the fellow's clappers, they then went the rounds, forcing him to show the way, and clapping, just as the sentinel himself might have done. Were they not a couple of stout-hearted blades!

Presently the sound of a whistle is heard. Yazama and his companion know that the moment for action is come.

Clapping loudly, they shout 'Ama,' 'Kawa,' and, drawing back the bolts, throw wide open the great gate, through which Rikiya is the first to rush, followed closely by Sugino, Kimura, and his brother.

"Here we are, here we are," cry the men of the party, as they crowd tumultuously in.

Rikiya, meanwhile, scans closely the line of outer shutters, without being able to light upon a weak spot. Remembering, however, his father's device, suggested by the snow-laden bamboo, he deems the occasion a fit one for putting it into execution, and, ordering the unsplit bamboos they had brought with them to be strung with stout cord, caused the ends to be inserted in the upper and lower grooves in which the shutters move.

"Once, twice, thrice," and all the strings are cut at the same moment; the bamboos straighten themselves suddenly and all at the same time, so prizing up the upper framework and pressing down the lower cross-piece that the row of shutters fall in with a simultaneous clatter.

"Now for the attack," shout the leaders, while cries of 'Ama,' 'Kawa,' fill the air. The retainers of the house, aroused by the uproar, begin to show themselves, carrying torches and lanterns. The rear attacking party, having made their way through the rear gate, now appear, one company headed by Goyemon, the other by Yuranoske. The Karo, seating himself upon a camp-stool, gave his orders. His followers, few in number as they were, fought with desperate courage, and displayed to the utmost their skill as swordsmen.

"Have no eyes for aught but Moronawo," cried Yuranoske, "'tis his head that we require."

Aided by Goyemon, the Karo directed the struggle on every side, while the young men, vying with each other in bravery, kept up a constant clashing of weapons.

To the north of the mansion of Moronawo lay that of Nikki Harima-no-kami; to the south, the residence of Ishido Umanojo. On either side, the roofs of the buildings were crowded with men carrying lanterns, twinkling in the darkness of the night like the stars in heaven.

"Ya, ya," they cried, "what means all this uproar and confusion, clashing of weapons, and hurtling of arrows. Are you attacked by rioters, or by robbers, or has a fire broken out somewhere? We have been commanded to find out what is going on, and inform our masters of the cause of the disturbance."

"We are liegemen of Yenya Hang'wan," replied Yuranoske, without a moment's hesitation. "Some forty of us banded together to revenge our lord's death upon his enemy, and are now struggling to get at him. I who address you am Ohoboshi Yuranoske, and my companion here is Hara Goyemon. We are not rising against the government, still less have we any quarrel with your lords. As to fire, strict orders have been given to be careful, and we beg you not to be under any apprehensions on that score. We only ask you to leave us alone, and not to interfere with us; if, as neighbors, you should think yourselves bound to assist our enemy, we shall be obliged, despite our inclination, to turn our weapons against you."

To these bold words of Yuranoske the retainers of the noblemen on either side of the mansion of Moronawo shouted back approvingly:

"Right well done, right well done; in your place we should feel ourselves bound to act as you are acting; pray command our services."

And, the next moment, the roofs were deserted, amid cries of "down with your lanterns, there, down with your lanterns."

Meanwhile, the struggle with the retainers of Moronawo continued, some two or three only of Yuranoske's comrades being wounded after an hour's fighting, while quite a number of the enemy were stricken down.

Nothing, however, could be seen of Moronawo, although the soldier Heiyemon ransacked the buildings in search of him.

I have searched every room," cried Heiyemon, approaching his chief, "and probed the ceilings and floors with my spear, but without coming upon any trace of our enemy. But I looked into his sleeping-room and found the bed-clothes still warm, so that, seeing what a cold night it is, he cannot have got far away. Possibly he has made for the great gate, so, without further delay, . , .

The soldier was on the point of hastening away to guard the issue he had referred to when he was interupted by a voice crying:

"Ho, there, Heiyemon, not so fast, not so fast."

The next moment, Yazama abruptly entered the room, dragging with him their long-sought enemy, Moronawo. "Look at him, look at him," cried the elated captor, "I found him hidden in an outhouse, and dragged him here alive."

The sight of their enemy in their power revived the cast-down spirits of the conspirators, as the dew revives the drooping flower.

"Well done, well done, indeed," cried Yuranoske. "But he must not be put an end to unceremoniously. He filled the office of Prime Councillor to his Highness for a time, and must be put to death in due form."

At a sign from Yuranoske, Moronawo was led to the upper end of the room.

Yuranoske, addressing him, exclaimed: "Though but doubly humble retainers,* we have ventured to force ourselves within your walls, impelled by the desire of avenging the death of our lord upon his enemy. We pray you pardon our violence, and beg of you that you will present us with your head,† according to the usage of our country."

Moronawo, though a vile sort of creature enough, yet managed to keep a composed countenance, exclaiming, with forced calmness:

"Right, right, I am ready, here is my head—take it."

Thrown off his guard for a moment, the Karo approached his prisoner, who, suddenly drawing his sword, aimed a blow at Yuranoske which the latter only escaped by a nimble leap aside.

"Ha," cried the Karo, "a clever stroke that. Sah! Friends, upon him—you may slake your thirst for vengeance now."

Another moment, and the body of Moronawo lay on the floor, covered with wounds.

The conspirators crowded round it, wild with excitement, shouting:

"O rare sight! O happy fortune! Happy as though we feasted our eyes upon the *moki*‡

* Lit. "retainers of a retainer."

† The Karo wished his enemy to commit *seppuku*, and then to take his head. This was the form of vengeance that most approved itself to the sentiments of a Japanese gentleman of the old school.

‡ The *moki*, according to a Chinese fable, was a species of sea-tortoise with one eye in its belly. For three thousand years the monster had longed to see the light but in vain. One day, while swimming about the surface of the sea, it came

clinging to his waif, or upon the flower of the *Udonge*,* that blossoms but once in three thousand years."

Cutting off their enemy's head with the dagger with which their dead master had committed *seppuku*, they resumed their orgie, exclaiming:

"We deserted our wives, we abandoned our children, we left our aged folk uncared for, all to obtain this one head. How auspicious a day is this!"

They struck at the head in their frenzy, gnashed at it, shed tears over it; their grief and fury, poor wretches, beggared description.

Yuranoske drawing from his bosom the *ihai*† of his dead master, placed it reverently on a small stand at the upper end of the room, and then set the head of Moronawo, cleansed from blood, on another opposite to it. He next took a perfume from within his helmet, and burnt it before the tablet of his lord, prostrating himself and withdrawing slowly, while he bowed his head reverently three times, and then again thrice three times.

"O thou soul of my liege-lord, with awe doth thy vassal approach thy mighty presence, who art now like unto him that was born of the lotus-flower to attain a glory and eminence beyond the understanding of men! Before the sacred tablet tremblingly set I the head of thine enemy, severed from his corpse by the sword thou deignedst to bestow upon thy servant in the hour of thy last agony. O thou

into contact with a piece of drift-wood, to which it immediately clung in such a manner that the belly was uppermost under the wood, a ragged hole in which fortunately allowed the tortoise the opportunity of at last satisfying its long-cherished desire.

* The *Udonge* is a plant so rarely seen in flower that it is fancifully said to bloom but once in three thousand years. See Appendix.

† A wooden tablet, often lacquered, inscribed with the posthumous name of the deceased.

that art now resting amid the shadows of the tall grass,* look with favor on my offering." Bursting into tears, the Karo of Yenya thus adored the memory of his lord.

"And now, comrades," he resumed, after a pause, "advance, each of you, one after the other, and burn incense before the tablet of our master."

"We would all," cried Ichido, "venture to ask our chief first among us to render that honor to our lord's memory."

"Nay," answered the Karo, "'tis not I who of right should be the first. Yazama Jintaro, to you of right falls that honor" * * * *

"Not so," cried Yazama, "I claim no such favor. Others might think I had no right to it, and troubles might thus arise."

"No one will think that," exclaimed Yuranoske. "We have all freely ventured our lives in the struggle to seize Moronawo, but to you, to you fell the glory of finding him, and it was you who dragged him here, alive, into our presence. 'Twas a good deed, Yazama, acceptable to the spirit of our master; each of us would fain have been the doer of it. Comrades, say I not well?"

Ichido assented on behalf of the rest.

"Delay not, Yazama," resumed Yuranoske, "for time flies fast."

"If it must be so," cried Yazama, as he passed forward, uttering *gomen* † in a low tone, and offered incense the first of the company.

"And next our chief," exclaimed Ichido.

"Nay," said the Karo, "there is yet one who should pass before me."

"What man can that be," asked Ichido, wonderingly, while his comrades echoed his words.

* An euphemism for the grave.

† Lit. "honorable face," "lending me your honorable countenance," i. e., "with your permission."

The Karo, without replying, drew a purse marked with cross stripes from his bosom. "He who shall precede me," cried the Karo, "is Hayano Kampei. A negligence of his duty as a vassal prevented him from being received into our number, but eager to take at least a part in the erection of a monument to his liege-lord he sold away his wife, and thus became able to furnish his share toward the expense. Thinking that he had murdered his father-in-law to obtain the money, I caused it to be returned to him, and, mad with despair, he committed *seppuku* and died—a most miserable and piteous death. All my life I shall never cease to regret having caused the money to be returned to him; never for a moment will be absent from my memory that through my fault he came to so piteous an end. During this night's struggle, the purse has been among us, borne by Heiyemon—let the latter pass forward, and, in the name of his sister's dead husband, burn incense before the tablet of our lord."

Heiyemon, thus addressed, passed forward, exclaiming:

"From amidst the shadows of the tall grass-blades the soul of Kampei thanks you for the unlooked-for favor you confer upon him." Laying the purse upon the censer, he added:

"'Tis Hayano Kampei who, second in turn, offers incense before the tablet of his liege-lord."

The remainder followed, offering up in like manner, amid loud cries of grief, and with sobs and tears, and trembling with the anguish of their minds, incense before the tablet of their master.

Suddenly the air resounds with the trampling of men, with the clatter of hoofs, and with the noise of battle-drums.

Yuranoske does not change a feature.

"'Tis the retainers of Moronawo who are coming down upon us—why should we fight with them?"

The Karo is about to give the signal to his comrades to accomplish the final act of their devotion by committing *seppuku* in memory of their lord, when Momonoi Wakasanoske appears upon the scene, disordered with the haste he had used, in his fear of being too late.

"Moroyasu, the young brother of Moronawo, is already at the great gate," cries Momonoi. "If you commit *seppuku* at such a moment it will be said that you were driven to it by fear, and an infamous memory will attach to your deed. I counsel you to depart hence without delay, and betake yourselves to the burial-place of your lord, the temple of Komyo."

"So shall it be," answered Yuranoske, after a pause. "We will do as you counsel us, and will accomplish our last hour before the tomb of our ill-fated lord. We would ask you, Sir Wakasanoske, to prevent our enemies from following us."

Hardly had Yuranoske concluded, when Yakushiji Jiro* and the Bannai Sagisaka suddenly rushed forth from their hiding-places, shouting:

"Ohoboshi, villain, thou shalt not escape," and struck right and left at the Karo. Without a moment's delay, Rikiya hastened to his father's assistance, and forced the wretches to turn their weapons against himself. The struggle did not last long. Avoiding a blow aimed at him by Yakushiji, Rikiya cut the fellow down, and left him writhing in mortal agony upon the ground. The Bannai met with a similar fate. A frightful gash upon the leg brought him to his knee,—a pitiable spectacle enough, and a few moments afterwards the wretch breathed his last.

"A valiant deed, a valiant deed!"

. . . . . .

For ever and ever shall men hand down the memory of the true-hearted men, of whose heroism the tale, imperishable as the leaf † of the bamboo, and for ever to be stored in the annals of the never-ending race of our rulers, I have here writ down for posterity.

* One of the commissioners referred to in the 4th book.

† *Take* (bamboo) formed part of the boy-name of each successive occupant of the throne of the Shoguns during the period in which the so-called temporal power was vested in the hands of members of the Tokugawa family.

# APPENDIX.

THERE are several different texts of the CHIUSHINGURA extant, among which that of the *joruri*,* which has been used in preparing the foregoing translation, seems to be the most popular.

The author was one Chikamatsu Monzayemon, who appears to have flourished in the early portion of the eighteenth century. I am not aware of any other important production of his pen.

* The etymology of this word is uncertain. It is, however, a Sinico-Japanese compound, and the Chinese characters by which it is represented mean "the pure blue porcelain glaze," or, metaphorically, the genius of tragedy. According to a writer in the *Japan Mail* of March 10th, 1875, this species of composition takes its name from Joruri Hime, the mistress of the favorite Japanese hero, Yoshitsune, the brother of Yoritomo, the founder of the hereditary Shogunate, (A. D. 1180, circiter); and, though afterwards chiefly used in tragic narration, was first employed in telling the tale of the loves of the frail princess. More probably, however, the latter fact has, by a kind of metonomy, invested this Japanese Timandra (Yoshitsune may, without impropriety, be called the Alkibiades of Japan) with a posthumous title which it were not, perhaps, too fanciful to render as "The Muse of the Drama."

A *joruri*, at the present day, is a sort of dramatic prose romance, commonly of a tragic cast, of which the dialogue may be recited or sung by actors, with appropriate gestures; the *utaigata*, or song-men of the orchestra, interposing, from time to time, with the narative, and thus discharging in part the functions of a Greek chorus.

The edition I have used announces itself as having been printed, partly at Ohosaka, by one Seisuke, at the sign of Kajima, in the Funa-machi ("Ship street"); partly at Yedo, at a house in the Seto-mono-cho ("Porcelain street"), near the Nihon-bashi ("Japan Bridge"—the "London Bridge" of the Capital of Dai Nippon).

It is in eleven parts or *livraisons*, the last being double, and is printed in a large thick character known as *kantera*, a term apparently not Japanese and the meaning of which I have been unable to discover.

The text is written partly in *sosho*,* Chinese character, partly in the flowing Japanese syllabic character, known as *hiragana*, the *sosho* forms being not seldom accompanied by a transliteration into *hiragana*.

In addition, the columns of the text are, to some extent, notated musically; various marks indicating where and how the voice should be modulated, and where the accompaniment should be introduced. There is no punctuation, beyond a division into sentences or phrases, shown by a plain circle having nearly the same value as our comma.

A Japanese orchestra generally consists of nine performers (*gakunin*), distributed as follows:

* *i. e.* "grass writing," a cursive abbreviated mode of writing, more commonly used in Japan than the ordinary square Chinese. The principal difficulty in the acquirement of the written language lies in the decipherment of this variable and puzzling form, well termed by the old Spanish missionaries an invention *de un conciliabulo de los demonios para enojar a los fideles*, and several years' assiduous study are necessary to obtain a useful command of it, which can be retained afterwards only by constant practice. The advantages that would result to the Japanese from an adoption of the Roman character—a perfectly feasible change—are simply incalculable. A real foundation would thus soon be laid, on which a true national civilization, very different from the mere imitative and often very laughable travesty of Western forms, beyond which the Japanese, for the present, seem unable to advance, might be based; and the land of Dai Nippon, which can at least boast of never having been insulted by the tread of the conqueror within historic times, would rapidly assume a leading position among the ancient empires of the Extreme East.

Two *Taiko-gata*, or drummers.
Two *Fuye-gata*, or fife-players.
Two *Shoshichiriki*, or flageolet-players.
One *Kane-gata*, answering to our triangle-man.
Two *Utai-gata*, or song-men.

Such an orchestra is called a *kunin-bayashi;* when it consists of only one performer of each kind it is called a *gonin-bayashi—i. e.*, "five-men-grove" *hayashi*, "grove" being the technical term for a musical band, company, or orchestra. The *kane-gata* generally introduces and terminates the whole piece, and each successive movement of the music as well. He is followed by the flageolet-players, and they, in their turn, by the fifers, the drummers coming last. The whole band, except the *kane-gata* and the *utai-gata*, then perform a sextet in concert, the *kane-gata* introducing his instrument from time to time. The sextet finished, the duets—or, in a *gonin-bayashi*, the solos—recommence, and the whole piece thus consists of a succession of movements, in which the instrumentalists follow each other in the order above described; each movement being a series of duets, in a full orchestra, by the different musicians, followed by a sextet of the whole of them, except the triangle and song-men.

The action of the romance is laid in the fourteenth century, but the events upon which it is founded really occurred at the commencement of the eighteenth; and must have created a great and lasting interest among the people, for the story is referred to in the commonest epitomes of Japanese history, and is—or, at least, was, some few years ago—familiar to every Japanese with the least tincture of education. In view, however, of the severe penalties that, under the Shogunate, attached to the publication of recent or current events of a public character, the author found himself forced to adopt the practice, not uncommon with Western writers of a couple of centuries back, of barely disguising the reality by dilating it, so to speak, with a certain amount of fiction, and by so altering names and

dates as to evade the law without too effectually concealing the truth. The episode has been given to the world by Mr. Mitford, in one of his admirable *Tales of Old Japan*, that of the "Forty-seven *Ronin*"; but I have nevertheless thought it not out of place to re-tell the tale in the following abbreviation from a popular Japanese version of it, endeavoring, as far as possible, merely to supply the *lacunæ* in Mr. Mitford's version.

During the reign of the Shogun Iyetsuna, the President of the *Gorojiu* (Council of State, lit., "Assembly of elders"), about the middle of the eleventh month of the thirteenth year of the period Genroku (A.D. 1701), was officially informed that, In the third month of the ensuing year, three ambassadors of high rank would arrive at Yedo from the Court at Kioto. The President, in consequence of this announcement, appointed Asano Takumino-Kama (Yenya Hang'wan) and Kamei Sama (Wakasanoske) special commissioners to receive the ambassadors, with directions to consider themselves under the orders of an official of no very high rank, Kira Kodskenoske Yoshifusa (Moronawo). The *Karo* of Kamei, Ogiwara (Honzo) by name, on hearing of his master's appointment under Kira Kodske, who soon began to show his harsh and tyrannical disposition, lost no time in seeking out the latter, and winning his favor by timely gifts. Ohoishi Kuranoske (Ohoboshi Yuranoske), the *Karo* of Asano Takumi, refused to act in a similar manner, though much pressed to do so by Ohataka Gengo (Ohowashi Bunga), a retainer of Asano. Kira Kodske consequently received Asano with the worst grace possible, and took every opportunity of slighting him. On the arrival of the ambassadors, Asano, who was but ill-acquainted with the duties of his office, committed several grave errors in the discharge of his commission, for which he was severely reprimanded by Kira Kodske. Anxious to avoid a repetition of his fault, Asano, previously to the coming-off of a grand entertainment which the Court at Yedo gave to the ambassadors, sought advice and instruction from his superior. But the revengeful and covetous Kira Kodske refused to assist him in any way, and treated him with such violence that the unfortunate

Asano at last lost his temper, and drew his sword upon his tyrant within the precincts of the palace, inflicting upon him a severe wound. Kira Kodske, indeed, would have been slain, but for the timely, or untimely, interference of one Kachikawa Yosobei (whose *role*, in the romance, is appropriated by Honzo). By thus drawing weapon within the court-precincts, Asano committed a capital offence, and was accordingly compelled to rip his bowels open, on the fourteenth of third month of fourteenth year of Genroku (A.D. 1702).

Meanwhile, Kayano Sampei (Hayano Kampei), a retainer of Asano, in company with a comrade, had, at the commencement of the quarrel between their master and Kira Kodske, the consequences of which he dreaded, travelled the extraordinary distance of one hundred and seventy *ri* (420 miles) in four and one-quarter days—ordinarily a journey of seventeen days—to find the *Karo* of their clan, Kuranoske, who was in Banshiu (Harima), and warn him of the danger which Asano ran through the ill-will of Kira Kodske.

News of the self-dispatch arrived the very day after their arrival, and the retainers of Asano, wild with rage and grief, hardly knew how to act. Kuranoske next received information from Yedo that unless his master's castle and lands were surrendered, orders would be issued that the whole family and clan of Asano should be utterly destroyed. The *Karo* endeavored to avert this disaster, but in vain; and, on the news of his want of success reaching him, assembled the clan, and after explaining to them their position, and the impossibility of defending their lord's castle and lands against his enemies, produced a document binding them to commit self-dispatch, to the terms of which he prevailed upon sixty-three of them to signify their assent in the most solemn manner, namely, by imposing upon it their hands smeared with their own blood. The rest had discreetly retired during the delivery of the *Karo's* address.

Having thus separated his wheat from the chaff, he called the sixty-three together again, and told

them that his real purpose was, not that they should at once commit self-dispatch, but that they should first of all slay Kira Kodske, and afterwards "follow their lord upon the dark path." This was agreed to on the eleventh of the fourth month.

Amano Yarhei (Amagawa Gihei) now comes upon the scene. He had acted as agent for the clan, and, on hearing of the cruel death of Asano, had offered Kuranoske all the aid he could give towards the carrying out of any design the *Karo* might entertain against Kira Kodske. The *Karo* at first declined the trader's assistance, but, on the latter's devotion being shown by his attempt to kill himself on being refused the boon he asked for, Kuranoske revealed to him the plot to revenge the death of Asano upon his enemy, and consented to allow the delighted *chonin* to furnish the requisite arms and fighting gear.

The *Karo* then laid hands on the treasure of Asano, and, after calling in and paying off the paper-currency of the clan, and reserving a small sum for the expenses of the conspiracy, divided the remainder equally among his sixty-three fellow-conspirators, each of whom received twenty-five *riyos*. This was especially displeasing to one Ono Kurohei (Ono Kudain), who had urged the *Karo* to divide the money among the conspirators proportionately to their salaries,—a proposition to which Kuranoske would not listen, saying that misfortune had put them on a level.

The conspirators then separated, promising to assemble upon the signal of the *Karo*.

Hayano Sampei (Hayano Kampei), meanwhile, went to his village, and there found his mother dead. His father besought him to secede from the conspiracy, pleading his age and loneliness; and Hayano, distracted between his love for his father and his sense of honor and loyalty to his lord, sought escape from the dilemma in self-dispatch.

All proper preparations having been made, Kuranoske, with his comrades—the conspirators had, in the interval, dwindled down to forty-seven in number—forced their way into the mansion of Kira

Kodske by night, and put the enemy of their much-mourned lord to death. This act of vengeance seems to have been accomplished on the fourteenth of the last month of the fourteenth year of Genroku (A. D. 1702). The authorities were somewhat perplexed how to act—so great was the sympathy felt for the devoted band—but finally condemned them to *seppuku*, which they accomplished the following year at the tomb of Asano, in the burial ground of the Temple of Sengaku at Yedo.

The Temple of Sengaku is close to that of Tosen, formerly the British Legation—and the tombs of Asano and his forty-seven devoted followers are still shown there.

The marvellous portion of this 'ower-true tale' remains to be told. The conspirators, after slaying Kira Kodske, cut off his head, and offered it with proper ceremonial at the tomb of their lord. As the head touched the stone-work the monument was distinctly seen to quiver.

The following is said to be the 'Schwanenlied' of Asano:

Kaze saso'u
Hana yori mo,
Nawo mata haru no
Nagori wo
Ika ni to ka sen!

which may be thus rendered—

* Tender blossoms strew the ground,
Flung in wan confusion round
By the winds too boist'rous breath;
More my lot might pity find,
Forced to leave sweet Spring behind,
Doomed to an untimely death.

* Asano died in the month of March, when the wild-cherry, so often the theme of Japanese poets and artists, is in blossom—a fugitive beauty, soon perishing under the rough blasts of the equinoctial gales.

Page 1. *Shogun.*

This, the ordinary official title of the former Kubo (known generally to foreigners as Tycoon) is a Sinico-Japanese compound meaning 'General' or 'Commander of the Forces.'

The full title is Sei-i-tai-shogun, 'barbarian-quelling Generalissimo,' and is said to have been first bestowed, about 86 B. C., by the Emperor Shiujin upon his son, the celebrated Yamato-take-no-Mikoto, who reduced the indigenous Aino tribes of the North and East into subjection to the Imperial power.

The first of the hereditary Shoguns, however, was Minamoto Yoritomo, upon whom the title was conferred in A. D. 1190, or, at least, from that date, if, as some writers maintain, it was bestowed posthumously. Whatever may be the truth as to the date of bestowal of the rank upon Yoritomo, there can be no doubt as to his exercise of the power belonging to it for many years previous to his death, which was caused by a fall from his horse in the last year of the 12th century after Christ. The predominant position which he had won for the office was maintained by his successors in it, all of whom were direct or collateral descendants from the Minamoto stock—or were adopted as such—up to the year 1868, when the Mikado resumed the power of which his ancestors had for so long a period been deprived, and H'totsubashi, the last, and apparently the least energetic of his dynasty, retired to the town of Shizuoka, some 60 miles westward of Yokohama, where, forgetful of the glories of his foregoers, he leads a life of somewhat ignoble obscurity and ease.

Page 1. *The Shogun of the Ash'kaga family had overthrown Nitta Yoshisada.*

The Ash'kaga branch of the Minamoto family held the Shogunate from A. D. 1334 to A. D. 1279, or thereabouts.

When the dynasty of Yoritomo became extinct, in A. D. 1216, the Shogunate passed, nominally, first into the hands of members of the great Fujiwara house (one of the original eight noble families),

and afterwards into those of a succession of Shinwo, or princes of the Imperial blood, but the real power was exercised by the Hojo family,* connected by marriage, and, probably by blood also, with that of Yoritomo.

During this period, the Mikados seem to have been mere puppets in the hands of the Hojo usurpers, but towards its close, the Emperor Godaigo, who owed his elevation to the Court of Kamakura (then the eastern capital and residence of the Shoguns, as Yedo, now Tokei, was afterwards, now a mere village, distant some 16 miles from Yokohama, and chiefly famous for its grand image of Buddha)—nevertheless made a show of independence, and, in his attempt to free himself from the thraldom in which he was held by his powerful vassal, brought about the war known in Japanese history as the war between the Faction of the North (the Kanakura party) and the Faction of the South (Kioto party), which was to be alike ruinous to himself and his rebellious subject. The war, which commenced in A. D. 1319, lasted, or rather languished, for 75 years. During it, either party maintained its own Emperor, but, since the revolution of 1868, the names of the Emperors of the North have been expunged ftom the Imperial catalogue, and the Emperors of the south alone are now considered as having been the rightful occupants of the throne.

In A. D. 1330, the Emperor Godaigo was taken prisoner and sent in exile to the island of Oki. A year or two afterwards, however, one of the Imperial generals defeated the Hojo forces in a great battle, and made himself master of Kamakura. The Imperial exile was re-established upon the throne, but ungratefully gave his confidence, not to the men whose exertions he owed his return to power, but to a member of the Ash'kaga family of the name of Takauji. Disgusted with their treatment, Nitta and his party rose in rebellion against an emperor who knew so little how to requite their services. The struggle was a brief one. Takauji was ordered to march against them, and they were defeated with great

* The town of Odawara, so well-known to European residents, was the principal seat of this family, who had a strong castle there, now in ruins, and held sway over a large extent of the surrounding country.

slaughter, Nitta himself being among the slain. The rebellion thus extinguished, Takauji was installed as Shogun at Tamakura, and founded a dynasty that for the next two centuries and a half was virtually to govern Dai Nippon.

Page 13. *Shrine to be erected to Hachiman.*

The etymology or real signification of this appellation of the Japanese Ares I have not been able to trace. The Chinese characters by which it is usually represented mean the 'Eight banners,' and may possibly imply some notion of the god being a sort of manifestation of the Buddha of the Eight Banners.

The hero deified under this title was the Emperor Ojin, who died about the commencement of the 4th century of our era. His mother was the Empress Jingu, celebrated as the conqueror of Korea. According to some, Ojin was the conqueror of Korea, and was, on this account, deified as the God of War. Others, again, assert that he made the Japanese acquainted with the art of weaving, and favored the adoption of Chinese civilization. He was commonly worshipped by *samurai*, and was vernacularly known as the Yumiya, or Archer God. The principal temple at Kamakura is dedicated to his worship.

Page 13. *Nengo Riyaku-ô.*

Previously to the adoption, some two or three years since, of the European calendar, three systems of chronology existed in Japan, all similar in character to what still exist in China.

The era of the first commenced with the accession of the traditional Emperor Jinmu, in B.C. 600. Thus A. D. 1870, was 2,530 of the era of Jinmu.

The second was based upon the sexagenal cycle used in China to the present day. The first of these cycles commenced with the 61st year of the reign of Hwang Ti, B. C. 2,637, and the year 1875 is the 11th of the 76th cycle.

The mode in which the sexagenal cycle was used, and each year of it distinguished, was not a little complicated, and for an explanation of it—which would be out of place here—the reader is referred to any work of repute upon China or Japan.

According to the third system, the one most commonly used in books, any year after A. D. 645 was known by its place in the 'nengo' (chin 'nien hao') or year periods, which from time to time were established and named by Imperial decree. These 'nengo' had a duration of from 2 to 15 or 20 years, and were distinguished by such high-sounding titles as 'Exalted Virtue,' 'Celestial Peace,' 'Great Development,' and the like. The present 'nengo,' which is not to be changed during the reign of the present Emperor, is called Meiji, 'Illustrious Rule,' and the year 1875 is the 8th year of it.

The name 'Riyaku-o in the text signifies 'Uninterrupted Prosperity.'

Page 14. *Wakasanoske Yasuchika.*

In Japan, the family name, only used by men, comes first; the individual name assumed at puberty comes afterwards. Under the old regime, the son of a *samurai* on attaining the age of 15 performed 'gembuku,' that is, shaved off his forelock, and became a 'jak'k'wan,' entitled to wear a hat or cap. At the same time, he adopted a 'nanori,' or individual name, generally selected for him, according to certain very intricate rules, by a man of learning, with or without the assistance of a soothsayer, astrologer, or diviner.

Government officials, and *shizoku* generally, (the *samurai* of the 'Tokugawa jibun,' or old Tycoon days) are now giving up the practice of 'gembuku,' and wear their hair in the European fashion, as they clothe their bodies in strange-looking travesties of European garments.

Page 14. *A Baron of Hakushu.*

Hakushu is synonymous with Hoki, one of the former Sanindo provinces.*

* Vide Mr. Satow's Geography of Japan, Trans. As. Soc. Jap., 1872-73, p. 33.

Page 14. *Seiwa family, a Genji house.*

The usurpation of Yoritomo—for such, in effect, his ascendancy became—towards the close of the 12th century, was the culminating point of the struggle between the powerful Taira, or Hei, and the Minamoto, or Gen, clans, that, for a long course of years, had spread ruin through the Empire, to end in the establishment of the hereditary Shogunate in the family of the successful chief of the latter faction. The Seiwa was the elder branch of the Gen house, and derived its name from its founder, the Emperor Seiwa, who flourished about the middle of the 9th century.

Page 14. *Hatamoto.*

Literally, 'under the flag' (of the Shogun). They were the lesser feudatories of the Kubo, and were often known as *Shomiyo* ('lesser names'), in contradistinction to the *Daimiyo* ('greater names'). The main difference, however, between the higher and lower nobles, seems to have been less one of birth than of property—the *Daimiyos* being holders of lands of which the produce was valued at 10,000 *kokus* of rice annually or more, the *Shomiyos* of lands of which the annual produce was under 10,000 *kokus*.

Page 15. *The Twelve Naishi.*

A Sinico-Japanese word, meaning 'inner attendants.' They were noble ladies, daughters of *Kuge* who were peers of the Mikado's creation, higher in rank than the *Daimiyo* (who were in reality, nothing more than deputies of the Shogun), but possessed only of small estates, and of little direct power or influence. Their duties were to wait upon the Mikado and his consort (*K'wogo*).

Page 17. *Yoskida Kenko.*

A mediocre versifier, who flourished under the Shogunate of Tekauji. Some of the pieces in the well-known *Kokinshiu* (Songs, New and Old), are attributed to him

Page 27. *The Bannai, Sagisako.*

A *Bannai* seems to have been a captain or chief of the guard.

Page 28. *O-gon.*

Coins of various values, but commonly, I am informed, equivalent to 21 *riyos*. The coin, which was generally of silver gilt, was rarely, if ever, intrinsically of its current value. It was an oblong, thin disk, rounded at either end, and tightly wrapped in paper, stamped with the seal of the province, and marked with its current value.

Page 33. *The old song Takasago.*

A translation of this curious ballad will be found at the end of the Appendix.

Page 47. *Kamishimo.*

A sort of outer ceremonial dress, of stiffened material, curiously shaped about the shoulders so as to present a winged appearance. The trader-class, as well as the *samurai*, seem to have had the right of wearing it. A peculiar *kamishimo* without any device or crest was worn by a *samurai* when committing *seppuku* in obedience to an Imperial decree.

Page 54. *The lantern was bent like a bow.*

This is wrongly translated. The lantern was an ordinary one, fitted into a wooden bow-like framework by which it was held.

Page 56. *I am as fortunate as if I were to come upon the Udonge in bloom.*

In the great Sinico-Japanese Encyclopœdia—*Wa Kan Sanzai-dsuye*, 'Japanese and Chinese

Illustrations of the Three powers (Heaven, Earth, and Man),—vol. 94, part first, under the heading of *Basho*, we are told that the *Udonge* is a kind of fig-tree. In vol. 88, under the word *Ichijiku*, the *Udonge* is again declared to be a kind of fig. The popular notion is that the *Udonge* blooms but once in three thousand years, a notion derived, doubtless, from the fact that, in figs, the flowers being within and not without the receptacles, are not externally visible; and hence the tree appears never to bloom.

In the *Nehankiyo*, a Buddhist doctrinal work said to have been composed shortly after the death—or perfection—of Sakaya Muni, the manifestation of Buddha upon earth is announced as a most rare event—rare as the blooming of the *Udonge*.

In the century of poems collected by Kiu-an, there is a stanza referring to the *Udonge*, of which the following is a literal rendering:

> "The reign of our Emperor,
> May be as the *Tama-tsubaki*,
> Everlastingly green;
> May his days be so long in the land
> That he may behold the *Udonge* bloom a hundred times."

The *Tama-tsubaki* is a hardy evergreen shrub, apparently identical with the *Euonymus Japonicus*. The *Ficus Indica*, it will be remembered, is reverenced by the Southern Buddhist as a sacred tree.

Page 61. *'Namu Amida Butsu,' or 'Namu miyoho renge kiyo.'*

Commencement of Buddhist prayers. The words are neither Japanese nor Chinese, but are altered Sanscrit. The first is said to mean "O aid me, thou everlasting Buddha." The second, translating the Chinese characters in which it is commonly written, would seem to signify: "O precious law and gospel

of the lotus-flower." Good souls are supposed to live forever, perched upon a lotus-flower. The translation is not quite correct. Sadakuro tells his victim to choose whatever prayer he may prefer, and die without further delay.

Page 64. *With teeth yet unblackened.*

The extraordinary custom of blackening the teeth and shaving off the eye-brows was originally practiced by legally-married women only, but gradually came to be adopted by all women who had attained their twenty-second or twenty-third year, whether married or not. The practice of shaving off the eye-brows is said to be falling into desuetude, and the teeth are now, it is believed, blackened by married women alone, and even by them only after having given birth to a child. The material used in blackening the teeth is a preparation of gall-nuts and oxide of iron. The custom is said to have arisen in the reign of the Emperor Daigo (10th century), but I have not been able to find any satisfactory explanation of its origin or meaning.

Page 64. *The Bon month.*

That is, the seventh month, when, on the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth days, the *Bon* festival, or feast of lanterns, is held. The Chinese characters representing the word *Bon* mean 'demon or spirit period,' but the etymology of the word is unknown to me. The popular term is *Tama-matsuri*, for *Tamashii no matsuri*, 'feast of ghosts'—All Souls' Day, as we should say.

A shelf is erected in the principal chamber of each house, on which rushes are laid, and over which the *ihai*,* or tablets of the departed, are suspended, in the hope that their spirits will revisit the scene

* See *post*.

of their earthly life. A cord is carried across the shelf (*Tamadana*, or spirit-shelf), from which depend various fruits, such as millet (*Panicum italicum*), *Hiye* (*Panicum cruscorvi*), water-bean nuts (*Nelumbo nucifera* of Gœrtner), chestnuts, and egg-apples or brinjals (often called aubergines, fruit of *Solanum melongena*). Various boiled cereals are also placed upon the spirit-shelf, laid on leaves of the water-bean.

On the thirteenth day, about sunset, an *ogara*, or hempstalk dried after having been peeled, is lit. The flame, which lasts only a short time, is the *Mukai-bi*, or 'greeting-flame,' welcoming the spirits on their arrival. On the evening of the fifteenth, the ceremony is repeated, and the *Okuri-bi*, or 'speeding-flame,' signifies the farewell of the living to the departing ghosts of the relations or ancestors whose *ihai* are suspended over the spirit-shelf.

Page 66. *Inari.*

A *Shinto* deity, the patron of rice-farmers. The Chinese characters of the name mean 'the bringer of rice.' The name *Inari* itself is Japanese, and is probably connected with the word *ine*—growing-rice, paddy. The fox (*Kitsune*) is supposed to be attached to the service of the god.

Page 68. *Nyogo Island.*

Said to be inhabited entirely by women. An account of it is given in the *Yumi-hari-dsuki*, a sort of romance founded upon the adventures of Yoritomo on a supposed visit to the island, which is placed in the neighborhood of the Loo-choo group. The egg-plant (*Solanum melongena*), or brinjal, is described as growing there to such a prodigious size that ladders are necessary to get at the fruit.

Page 86. *We shall climb together the Shidé Hill.*

In the mythical geography of Buddhism, a hill over which souls have to pass on their journey to hell or paradise. Some distance beyond it, they arrive at a place where three roads (*San-dsu*) meet, one of which leads to hell (*jigoku*), another to paradise (*gokuraku*), and the third from the world. Before continuing their journey—to hell or paradise, as may have been decreed—the ghosts strip off their clothes, and give them up to an old woman whom they find stationed there to receive them, under a pine-tree. The old woman is known popularly as *San-dsu no obasan.*

Page 86. *That you may take it with you on the dark path.*

The dark path is an euphemism for death. Ghosts are supposed to go under the world, where both hell and paradise seem to be situated; hence the expression, "to go on the dark path."

Page 86. *Jinseng medicine.*

Jinseng or Ginseng is the aromatic root of a species of Panax, a member of the Ivy family, much esteemed in China, and to some but a less extent in Japan, as a tonic and a stimulant. The plant is said to live for a thousand years, and then to assume a human form. The infusion, if given to a moribund, is supposed to prevent decomposition.

Page 86. *A high Kagura feast.*

There are two kinds of *Kagura* festival, both connected with Shintoism, commonly celebrated in Japan. That referred to in the text is known as a *Dai-dai Kagura*—lit, 'great great *Kagura*'—and is essentially a solemn adoration of the Sun-Goddess (Amaterasu no Ohongami, or Tenshoko Daijin),

followed by a sort of banquet, of which the expenses are defrayed by subscription. The solemnities, which are conducted by *Kannushi* (Shinto priests, guardians of shrines), take place in the hall of a Shinto *miya* or temple, previously guarded from evil influence and from intruders by a roughly-made rice-straw rope carried round its walls. First, the *O-harai* (august purification) of the Sun-Goddess is placed upon a stand, and proper offerings are set before it. The *O-harai* is a kind of box containing a fragment of the staff wielded by the priests of the temple of the goddess in Isé, at the festival there held in her honor twice every year. Each *Kannushi* then takes a branch of *Sakaki—Cleyera* or *Eurya* (?) *japonica*—which he holds in one hand, while with the other he commences to beat upon a small drum. The attention of the goddess being thus aroused, the assembled clergy, who have previously disposed themselves in a semi-circle in front of the stand upon which the *O-harai* was placed, chant, in a monotonous drawl and to the accompaniment of the drums which they do not cease to beat, a special liturgy (*norito*) to the Queen of the Plains of High Heaven (*Takamaga-hara*). The liturgy ended, *O-harai* inscribed with the name of the Sun-Goddess are bestowed upon the laity,* who, ranged in front of the shrine, have assisted at the ceremony, and the proceedings, passing, pleasantly enough, "from grave to gay," terminate with an entertainment, in which those who have subscribed to the expenses, no doubt, duly play their part. One of these *O-harai* ought to find a place upon every domestic *Kami-dana*, or god-shelf—a small model of a Shinto temple to be found in almost every house, labelled with the names of various deities, one of whom must be the Sun-Goddess—for it affords protection to the believer's household—only, however, for a period of six months, when it must be changed for a new one brought or fetched from Isé.

For the above description, I am in part indebted to Mr. Satow's account of the Shinto temple in Isé,

* Strictly upon the *Ujiko* only—that is, upon the dwellers in the district over which the local deity, worshipped at the shrine where the *Kagura* is celebrated, is supposed to extend his protection

contained in the 1873-4 volume of the *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* where a vast amount of information on the subject of Shintoism will be found. The following specimen of a Shinto prayer which I quote from Mr. Satow's admirable essay on the 'Revival of Pure Shintoism,' printed as an appendix to the first part of the third volume of the *Transactions* already cited, will, it is believed, be read with interest.

"From a distance I reverently worship with awe before Ame no Mi-hashira, and Kuni no Mi-hashira, also called Shinatsu-hiko no Kami and Shinatsu-hime no Kami, to whom is consecrated the Palace built with stout pillars at Tatsuta no Tachina in the department of Heguri in the province of Yamato."

"I say, with awe, deign to bless me by correcting the unwitting faults which, seen and heard by you, I have committed, by blowing off and clearing away the calamities which evil gods might inflict, by causing me to live long like the hard and lasting rock, and by repeating to the gods of heavenly origin and to the gods of earthly origin the petitions which I present every day, along with your breath, that they may hear with the sharp-earedness of the forth-galloping colt."

The other kind of *Kagura* is a kind of mystery or musical pantomime, enacted at the shrine of a local deity, in a sort of raised building or theatre accessory to the shrine and called *Kagura-do*. The celebration may be in honor of the local deity, and then takes place upon his death-day, or may simply be intended to propitiate heaven generally. The expenses are usually defrayed out of the offerings of pilgrims, and by contributions from the *Ujiko*—the dwellers under the protection of the god to whom the shrine is dedicated. Before the mystery opens, a particular kind of *sudsu*, *Kagura-sudsu*, and two *gohei* are placed in front of the *Kagura-do*. The *Kagura-sudsu* consists of twelve small bells, resembling those fastened round the tails of pack-horses in Japan, or those attached round the necks of mules in European countries, curiously strung together. A *gohei*, the proper Japanese term for which is *mitegura*, is a kind of wand. from one end of which depend, on either side, strips of paper, notched or

slit in a particular manner, so as to present a twisted appearance. Woodcuts and descriptions both of the *Kagura-sudsu* and *gohei* will be found in the fifteenth volume of the *Wa Kan Sanzai-dsuye*. The object of the bells is to call the attention of the god to what is about to take place; and the *gohei* represent—according to Mr. Satow—offerings of rough and fine cloth which are supposed to attract the god to the shrine.

The mystery is then inaugurated by a *Miko*, a sort of virgin priestess, generally a daughter of the *Kannushi*, presenting herself, carrying sometimes the *sudsu* and *gohei*, sometimes a sword, and going through a series of conventional gestures, which have the effect of purifying the spot from all uncleanliness, and of keeping all evil demons at a proper distance.

These preliminaries over and the place thus made fit for the reception of the god, the dance commences, regulated by the music of a small band, consisting of drums and fifes. The dancers accompany their movements by significant gestures by which the plot or tale is told, no singing or shouting being permitted. The number of performers varies considerably: all are clad in antique costumes, with tall caps on their heads, long sleeves and preposterously-lengthened *hakama*, or trousers, which turn up under their feet and are trailed behind, and all wear masks—one simulating the head of a fox, another the fierce look of a robber, a third the countenance of a mild genius, a fourth that of a demon, while others have the expression of a clown or natural, or are provided with horns, or show a protuberant snout like that of a pig, or have the cheeks prodigiously swollen and the forehead absurdly diminished.

The pantomime is various, but the following always forms a part of it. A dancer wearing the mask of a gentle genius is attended by another wearing that of a clown and carrying in his hand a bow and arrows. The former represents Hikohoho no Mikoto, one of the demi-god rulers of Japan. Their dance is grave and solemn, but is soon interrupted by the advent of a sturdy performer, who comes to the front strutting and stamping with great energy. This is Honosusori, a demon, wearing an appro-

priate mask and provided with a fish-hook and line. On approaching Hikohoho, he drops his swagger, and humbly salutes the superior genius, intimating by gestures that he can make no use of the fish-hook and line, and begging to be allowed to barter it for the bow and arrows carried by the god's attendant. His request being granted he retires in triumph; and Hikohoho tries his luck with the hook and line, but the first fish he catches breaks the line and makes off with the hook. The angler and his attendant thus discomfited, pray to the dragon-deities of the sea, who recover the hook and line, and present them to Hikohoho, who immediately returns both to Honosusori and takes back his bow and arrows.

The dance ended, the *Miko* dips a bamboo branch (*Arundo bambos, Thbg*) in warm water—according to some, the water of a bath which she has previously taken—and flirts a shower of drops over the assembled *Ujiko*. As the deity is supposed to have become incorporated with her body for the nonce, each drop so flung has a miraculous power, and those who are fortunate enough to be within their range may expect to be cured of all their ills.

The pantomime of Hikohoho and Honosusori is intended to commemorate the invention of angling; and the mystery, as a whole, is, according to Japanese tradition, a representation or imitation of the efforts made by the gods of old to induce the Sun-Goddess to sally forth from the cavern to which she had betaken herself in a fit of dudgeon.* And, indeed, it seems probable enough that it is a relic of the Sun-worship which appears to have been the earliest definite form of religion in the country, and simply signifies the joyous welcome with which the rising of the sun over the illimitable waters of the Eastern Sea was hailed by the primeval fishermen who dwelt on the shores of Dai Nippon. The etymology of the word is uncertain. Some derive it from *kami*, a god, and *eragi*, to laugh, and this derivation is

* It is no objection to this theory that the shrine at which the *Kagura* is enacted may not be dedicated specially to the Sun-Goddess, for the latter, as the Queen of Heaven, is supposed to have a general right of tendency of any shrine, and all local deities are more or less under her control.

countenanced by the fact that the Chinese characters by which the word is ordinarily represented mean 'the pleasing of the god.' To my mind, however, the more probable derivation is that from *kami* and *kura*, a seat.

The legend of the withdrawal of the Sun-Goddess is a good example of the Japanese myth, and the following account of it taken, in great part, from Mr. Satow's description of his visit to the Shinto temples in Isé, cited above, will not be without interest to the curious reader.

After the consummation of the marriage of Izanagi and Izanami, the first male and female deities and the immediate creators of Japan, the god Izanagi underwent a long purification by washing in the sea, in the course of which the Sun-Goddess Ama-terasu no Ohongami "the mighty goddess brilliant in heaven" was developed from his left eye, while from the right orb was produced Sosa-no-o mikoto or the Moon-God. Of all the numerous progeny of Izanagi these two were the most dear to him. He therefore resolved to make the Sun-Goddess the ruler in heaven, and she accordingly climbed up the pillar, on which heaven then rested, to assume the place assigned her. The Moon-God on the other hand was given the sovereignty over the blue sea, but the god neglected his kingdom and the earth became desolate in consequence. On being asked the cause of his evil temper, the moon-god replied that he wished to go to his mother Izanami, who was under the earth, and his father thereupon made him the ruler of the night. This however does not seem to have satisfied the god, for he committed various offences, among others, that of flaying alive a piebald horse from the head to the tail, and then throwing the carcass at his sister, who was seated at her loom, so alarming the goddess that she injured herself with the shuttle, and full of fear and wrath retired into a cave, the mouth of which she closed with a door of solid rock. Heavens and the earth were thus plunged into utter darkness, of which the more turbulent of the gods took advantage filling space with a buzzing noise, and the general disaster was great. The gods then assembled in the dry bed of the Amenoyasu River—the River of the Peace

of Heaven—and consulted as to the best means of appeasing the goddess. After much deliberation, the following device was hit upon. Iron was obtained from the Celestial mines, and the god Ishikoridome, with the assistance of the divine black-smith Amatsumore, after twice failing, succeeded in forging a large and perfect mirror, 'This, according to the legend, is the august deity in Ise.'

Other gods meanwhile planted 'Kodzu,' (Broussonetia) and 'Asa' (hemp), and from the bark of the former and the fibre of the latter, coarse and fine clothing was prepared for the use of the goddess. A palace was also built for her, ornaments made to adorn her person; and a sacred wand fashioned out of the wood of the 'Sakaki' (Cleyera Japonica or, more probably, Eurya Japonica), to place in her hand.

Tearing the bones out of the foreleg of a buck, the gods then set this in a fire of cherry wood; the bone cracked in a particular manner, which was considered to afford a favorable omen, and preparations were at once commenced to entice the goddess from her seclusion.

One god pulled up a Sakaki tree by the roots, hanging on its upper branches the mirror, and on the lower, the coarse and fine clothing. Another god then took the tree so adorned, and held it in his hand while he praised in a loud voice the power and beauty of the goddess.

A number of cocks were next collected and made to crow in concert. The god Tajikara (strong'i'th' arms) was posted close to the door of the cavern. The goddess Ameno Udsume was chosen as a sort of mistress of the ceremonies, and having adorned her head with a kind of moss, and bound up her sleeves with the stem of a climbing plant, commenced to play upon a sort of rude bamboo flageolet, accompanied by another god, who drew music from the strings of six bows arranged with the strings uppermost (the origin of the "Koto" a kind of horizontal harp), by drawing across them the rough stems of a tall kind of grass and of a rush, while the rest of the gods kept time with wooden clappers.

Bonfires were then lit in front of the cavern, and a circular box 'uke' placed near, on which Udsume mounted and began to dance, singing a song of which the words have been preserved.

Hito futa miyo
Itsu muyu nano
Ya kokono tari
Momo chi yorodsu'

These words are said to have been chosen afterwards to express the numerals

One two three four
Five six seven
Eight nine ten
Hundred thousand myriad.

There is a difficulty however in identifying 'tari' with 'to,' ten. But the stanza is susceptible of a totally different interpretation, and may be taken to mean,

Gods! behold the door,
Lo! the majesty of the goddess;
Shall we not be filled with delight?
Are not my charms excellent?

The last line is an invitation by the singer to the assembled deities to gaze upon her beauty.

These proceedings excited the mirth of the gods, whose Homeric laughter caused the heavens to tremble. The rest of the legend may be told in Mr. Satow's own words.

"Amaterasu Ohonkami thought this all very strange, and having listened to the liberal praises bestowed on herself, said, 'men have frequently besought me of late, but never has anything so beautiful been said before.' Slightly opening the cabin door, she said from the inside 'I fancied that in consequence of my retirement both Ama no Hara (heaven) and Ashiwara no Nakatsukuni (Japan)* were dark. Why has Ame no Udsume danced, and why do all the gods laugh?' Thereupon Ame no Udsume

* The middle country of reedy moors.

replied: 'I dance and they laugh because there is an honorable deity here who surpasses your glory' (alluding to the mirror). As she said this, Ame-nofutadama no Mikoto pushed forward the mirror and showed it to her, and the astonishment of Amaterasu O-mi-kami was greater even than before. She was coming out of the door to look, when Ame-no-tajikara-o-no Kami, who stood there concealed, pulled the rock door open, and, taking her august hand, dragged her forth. Then Ame-no-kogane no Mikoto took a rice-straw rope and passed it behind her, saying: 'Do not go back in behind this.'"

Udsume is commonly called Okame, and is represented in the *Kagura* by the dancer whose mask is a human face with puffed-out cheeks and diminutive forehead.

Page 107. *The sage Sonko and the philosopher Riuto.*

Both appear to have flourished under the Tsin dynasty (A. D. 265—317). On looking into their biographies, I find nothing worthy of record beyond the anecdotes in the text.

Page 109. *Gion street, the temple of Kiyomidsu, the great Buddha at Nara, the hall of Chion, and the temple of Kinkaku.*

The Gion street was, and still is, the principal pleasure-street of Kiyoto.

The temple of Kiyomidsu ('the temple of the Limpid Waters') is sacred to Kwanon—Chinese, Kwanyin—the Buddhistic Venus of the Far East. It is much visited by women, especially by those who desire children. In the grounds is a famous waterfall called Otowa no Taki, the waters of which are supposed to be endued by the goddess with various healing and invigorating virtues.

Nara is eastwards of the line joining Kiyoto and Ohozaka. Formerly the Tenshi (Emperor) resided there, but it does not seem ever to have been the real capital, as some pretend. Mr. Brunton, C.E., in a most interesting article upon native constructive art printed in the *Transactions of the Asiatic Society*

*of Japan* (1873-4, p. 81), gives an account of the Buddha, from which the greater portion of the following brief description is taken.

The image is contained in a temple 292 feet long, 170 feet broad, and 156 feet high—that is, to the arete of the roof, which is supported by 176 pillars. The height of the Buddha, which is in the usual squatting position, is 53½ feet, the length of the face being 16 feet, the width of the shoulders 28 feet 7 inches, and the length of the middle finger 5 feet six inches. On the head are 966 conventional curls. The glory or halo is 78 feet in diameter, and on it stand 16 figures, each 8 feet high.

Two images are placed in front, each 25 feet high.

The whole is in bronze, cast in pieces, afterwards soldered together, and the "whole construction shows great skill and original genius in the mixture of the metals, and in the methods of casting them."

The total weight of metal is about 450 tons, consisting of the following ingredients:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Gold . . . . . | 500 | lbs. avoirdupois. |
| Tin . . . . . | 16,827 | " " |
| Mercury. . . . | 1,954 | " " |
| Copper . . . . | 986,080 | " " |

This is the largest Buddha in Japan, and was first erected in 743 A. D., but was twice destroyed in the course of the wars that desolated Japan about that time, and the present image was set up in the course of the 12th century. Six times in succession the casting failed, and it was only at the seventh essay that a successful result was obtained. The head is said to be much more modern than the rest of the figure.

*The Hall of Chion* (*Chi-on In*)—A celebrated temple in Kioto of the Zenshu (Buddhistic) sect. The name *In* is generally given to a Buddhist temple of a higher, *Tera* to one of a lower, order. An intermediate kind exists, on which the appellation *Ryo* is bestowed. Chion In may be rendered as

'the Hall of Intelligent Benevolence.'

*The temple of Kinkaku.*—Erected by Taiko-sama, more renowned for its decoration, internal and external, than for the beauty of its situation. In fact, the temples of Kiyoto have been overpraised. None are comparable to the Shiba temple, lately destroyed by fire, in Yedo, or to the great Tosho-gu at Nikko. Kinkaku may be translated 'Golden Loftiness.'

Page 115. *'On Takasago's lonely shore,' etc., etc.*

This translation, or rather imitation, is based upon a misconception. A nearer approach to the real sense of the original will be found in the attempted version of the Ballad of Takasago, I have given at the end of this Appendix. The verses quoted terminate that portion of the Ballad usually sung at marriage feasts as a kind of epithalamium, but can hardly be effectively rendered into the English because of the untranslatable plays upon words contained in them. Some further explanation is given in a note to that portion of the above-mentioned version which corresponds to the quotation in question.

Page 122. *The devotion of Goshisho.*

Goshisho was a minister of a king of Go (Wu), who, despite his remonstrances, neglected the affairs of the state and engaged in a long and disastrous war with the state of Yets (Yueh). Upon Goshisho strongly advising his master to have nothing to do with a beautiful girl sent to him as a present by the king of Yets the king of Go became so enraged that he ordered his faithful minister to be decapitated and his head exposed. Shortly afterwards, he was taken prisoner by his adversary and led in chains past the very spot where the head of the unfortunate adviser was exhibited, the features of which were observed to form themselves into a bitter smile as the degraded king went by.

Page 122. *Hero Yojo.*

Yojo (Yu Jang) was the minister of a king of Shin (Tsin), who was defeated and slain in a war with a king of Shin (Ts'in). Yojo vowed revenge, and in order effectually to disguise himself swallowed varnish (some say, lime), which caused an eruption to break out in his face that completely changed his appearance. One day, hearing that the king of Ts'in would ride over a certain bridge, he stationed himself under it, armed with a sword, and awaited his enemy's approach. As the king of Ts'in came near, his horse refused to cross the bridge, despite the efforts of his rider, who, thinking there must be some cause for such an extraordinary aversion, ordered his attendants to search the neighborhood. They did so and found Yojo, whom they brought to their master, to whom he confessed his designs. The king laughed at the presumption of Yojo, and, handing him his mantle, said scornfully "Stick your sword through that, and imagine that my body is within it. Thus you can satisfy your longings for vengeance." Yojo took the mantle without saying a word, and wrapping it round himself, thrust his sword through it into his body and fell back dead.

Page 122. *The secret books of Son and Go.*

Son (in Chinese, Sun Wu or Sun Tsz) was a celebrated Chinese commander of the 6th century before Christ, in the service of Ho Lu, prince of Wu. He was also the author of a book on military science still in use. The "Three Steps and Six Methods" is the book bestowed upon Choryo by the genius Sekiko. (Vide post 'Choryo.')

Go (Chinese Wu K'i), a famous general in the service of Ts'u (a feudal state under the Chen dynasty, flourishing from the middle of the eighth to the latter third of the 4th century before Christ). Ordered to march against the state of Ts'i, of which his wife was a native, he put her to death lest she should persuade him to deviate from his duty. He was finally taken prisoner and slain by the people of Ts'i.

He wrote a book on strategy, which is still esteemed by military men. (See arts. 635 and 866 of Mr. Mayers' "Chinese Reader's Manual.")

Page 123. Note.

Asano Takumi no Kami was the real name of the prototype of Yenya. *Takumi no Kami* was the designation of his office, overseer of works; but *Asano Takumi*, in the common language, means 'poor in resources,' 'shallow in conception,' 'witless,' and the like.

Page 125. *The thread of his existence was snapped in twain.*

The soul is supposed to be a material substance of irregular bag-like form, kept within the interior of the body by a sinuous prolongation or 'thread' attached to some part of the human frame. On this 'thread' being snapped, the soul goes forth and life is terminated. The expression in the text *tama-no-o* may also refer to the rosary used by Buddhist priests, which consists of a hundred and eight beads strung together in the usual way. These hundred and eight beads are said to represent the hundred and eight lusts, cares, miseries, and vanities of the world; and as the sundering of the thread puts an end to the existence of the rosary, so the destruction of that human consciousness which links together the troubles of the world puts an end to all human ills and sorrows.

Page 124. *Komuso.*

A class of men who, either from remorse or from disgust with the world, abandoned society to lead the life of wandering mendicants. They were—for the practice has now fallen into desuetude—generally *samurai*, and went about dressed in white, wearing a curious deep-brimmed hat* which entirely

* See the woodcut opposite page 115.

concealed their features, and playing a sort of rude flageolet as they solicited alms. No special religious meaning seems to have attached to the custom. But the etymology of the word points to that contemplative life which leads to find absorption in nirvana, and the practice therefore was, in all probability more or less under the sanction of Buddhism.

Page 128. *Warai books.*

Lit., 'jest-books,' but in reality obscene books, which, even under the old regime, the higher classes in Japan at least avoided reading in the presence of others, and did not boast of possessing.

Page 131. *Village and household gods.*

The household god (*ujigami*) is strictly speaking, the common ancestor of the clan, and corresponds with the *Lar Familiaris* of the Romans, or the *Heros eponumos* of the Greeks.

The village gods (*ubusuna no kami*) are the local gods, but just as the *Penates* of the Romans often include, or were synonymous with, the *Lares*, so the *ubusuna no kami* seem to be confounded with the *ujigami*. Thus the inhabitants of a district under the protection of a special deity are commonly called the *ujiko*, or members of the family of the deity who himself is known generally as the *ujigami*. On this subject much information will be found in Mr. Satow's essay on the "Revival of Pure Shintoism" previously referred to.

Page 131. *High military and civil rank.*

Lit., to the command of his troops and the governorship of his province.

Page 140. *His manhood roused by his wife's cry of distress.*

Allusion is here intended, I believe, to the *otokodate* of Bandsui Chobei, a sort of Japanese knight

errant, or, more properly, benevolent brigand who robbed the rich to aid the poor, and enforced a code of his own against the oppressor in favor of the oppressed.

Page 143. *The Hero Choryo.*

In Chinese, Chang Liang. One of the principal partisans of the founder of the Han dynasty. He died in the early part of the second century before Christ. (See art. 26 of Mr. Mayers' work cited above, and the note to page 148 *supra*.)

Page 144. Note.

Zen in the quotation from Homer has been printed in capitals by mistake.

*Ihai.*

These tablets are inscribed with the posthumous name (*okuri-na*) of the deceased and the date of his death. When the wife survives the husband, she often has her name added in red letters, which upon her death are converted into black ones. *Ihai* are placed upon the *Buts-dana*, or Buddhist shelf, and also—as stated in a previous note—on the *Tama-dana*, or spirit-shelf, on All Souls' Day. The ancestral halls common in China, in which the tablets of the ancestors of a family, or sometimes of a clan, for several generations back, are honored, are not found in Japan.

The Eighth Book consists of a metrical description, mainly in the form of a dialogue, of the journey of Tonase, the wife of Honzo, the *Karo* of Wakasanoske, with her daughter, Konami, from Kamakura to Yamashina, a small village hard by Kiyoto, where they hoped to find Rikiya, the son of Yuranoske, the hero of the story, who, since the destruction of the house of Yenya, had withdrawn with his father

into an obscurity hitherto impenetrable. It will be remembered that in the Fourth Book Rikiya is affianced to the daughter of Honzo.

On the stage, this portion of the romance would be sung or recited with appropriate gestures, so arranged as to form a kind of continuous slow dance, to the acompaniment of music.

The following attempt at a versified rendering* claims the indulgence of the reader. The translator has endeavored to preserve, as far as possible, the spirit and even the letter of the original, although at the risk of roughness being perceptible in the execution of his task; but as the point of the text often lies in an untranslatable play upon words, he has been obliged in one or two instances to omit, and in others to modify or amplify portions of the interlude.

* It first appeared in an article by the translator in the *Westminster Review* for October, 1870; but in republishing it here, he has carefully revised, and, where necessary, altered the first version.

KONAMI:

"Its name upon this fleeting world*
Who first bestowed, O rapid Aska,† say,
Whose restless waters aye have swirl'd
Mid unfixed banks; so changeful is the way
Of Life to us from happiness hurl'd—
A Wavelet‡ breaks upon thy famous strand
Whom Yenya welcomed as the bride
Of his esquire who long had sought her hand,

* More literally, 'floating'; hence variable, light, changing, unstable world. The earth is supposed to be suspended in the ambient atmosphere, as a fish in water. The following account of the creation according to the ancient philosophy of Japan, extracted from the above-mentioned essay in the *Westminster Review*, may be interesting. "Originally all was chaos, matter existed, but rude and formless. Divine influence penetrated the cosmic mass; a process of differentiation ensued, and the whole assumed an ellipsoidal form. Next the grosser parts became concentrated towards the centre, and the foundations of the earth were laid; while the more subtle parts receded and enveloped the globe with an ethereal fluid, of which the more delicate exterior layers constituted the sky and those nearer to the earth's surface formed the firmament. The notion of the existence of space apart from matter seems utterly strange to the philosophy of China and Japan, which, besides, never attributes the creation of the materials of chaos to any Divine First Cause; but owns, though impliedly rather than expressly, the self-existence of primeval unorganized matter and of some divine influence, not seldom, indeed, supposed to originate within and from the elements of chaos itself, by which the original substance of the Universe is forced to differentiate itself into elementary earth, air, and sky. From such a divine influence spring a multitude of powers personified as innumerable genii, who are the immediate creators out of the already partially developed materials of chaos of the animate and inanimate objects of nature, and to whom are entrusted the government and regulation of the phenomena and laws of the Universe."

† A stream near Kiyoto, flowing through flat land, and constantly changing its bed. Hence the evanescent character of the banks amid which the river threads its way, and the propriety of Konami's address to it.

‡ A pun on the speaker's name, Konami, 'child-wave,' 'little wave.'

Low fall'n with Yenya's fall her pride ;
She was betrothed and Kakogawa's child
Fond hope deep in her being bore,
But Fortune adverse ne'er upon her smil'd,
No bridal gifts exchang'd,* no more
By lover sought, her soul is sad."

TONASE :

"Peace, daughter, peace ; thy mother bids thee haste
Towards Yamashina, where glad
Thou shalt by bridegroom surely be embraced.
Alas ! a bride-train thus forlorn
Hath never yet in all the world been known ;
With doubt and grief my heart is torn,
Without attendant, mother and child alone,
On foot must urge their weary way
And strive Yamato's far-off land to gain."

KONAMI :

"My body's white as snow, men say,
The chilly winds with crimson hues it stain
Such as the wild-plum's flow'r make gay,
My fingers all are sore benumbed with cold,

* Without which a marriage, or rather betrothal, is not looked upon as complete.

Apt name Kogoye* pass is thine ;
O'er Satta's ridge our toilsome way we hold,
Thence gazing back the curling line
All pensive watch of vaguely erring smoke
That issueth from Fuji's peak
And van'shing in the lofty sky is broke ; †
How sweet if 'twere the bonfire's reek
At threshold lit ‡ my welcome home a Bride,
How 'twould our sadness charm away !
With pines o'ergrown Matsubara's§ plain so wide
Now travers'd, crowded is the way,
The sea-coast way,‖ by some high Daimio's train,
I know not whose ; how blithe and gay
They seem : ah ! when shall I know joy again ?"

* A double pun here—'Kogoye' meaning: first, 'to freeze, congeal'; second 'the passage of a child.'

† They are travelling westward, leaving Fusi-yama (more properly, Fuji-san) behind them. Fuji-san is, and probably always has been within historical times, completely extinct. But the vapors that commonly wreathe or hover around its high bare summit often have the appearance of smoke or steam issuing from the long since cooled crater. The elevation of Fuji-san is close upon 13,000 feet above the level of the sea. The upper portion is covered with snow throughout the year, except from the end of July to the middle or end of September, when the peak is bare, though even during those months large masses of snow lurk in sunless clefts and crevices. No Japanese poet has omitted to celebrate the picturesque beauty of the mountain.

‡ Alluding to the custom, probably borrowed from China, of carrying the bride over a flame into her husband's house.

§ That is, 'the plain of pines.'

‖ The Tokaido, 'eastern sea-way,' the high road between the capitals of East and West Japan.

TONASE:

"O would that Fortune smiling were
Upon us, proud thy bridal train should be;
Than thee none happier, none more fair.
Now yonder may we Sur'ga's Fuchin * see.
The omen cheers thy mother's heart,
Her child shall yet the marriage pledge exchange,
By husband yet be led apart
In bridal bower, sweet vows to interchange,
In tender whispers heard by none.
Narrows the path thro' th' briars hardly seen,
To parent as to child † unknown;
Fain wouldst thou now on lover's strong arm lean."

KONAMI:

"On Mariko's sunny bank we stand,
His rapid stream shall roll our grief away,
Dear mother; now on our right hand
High Utsu's hill we leave behind, O say

* A considerable town in the province of Suruga, some 90 miles westward of Yokohama. It is now known as Shidsuoka, and is the present residence of Hitotsubashi, the last of the Shoguns. There is a curious word-play here, the sense of which I have endeavored to give—*sura ga fuchin* meaning, in the common language, 'the crowning of one's efforts with success."

† They are now supposed to be passing through a place called Oyashirdsukoshiradu, which name signifies 'unknown to parent, unknown to child,' and involves probably some local story or tradition.

Shall I a bridal pillow * press,
Half sleeping, by a husband's arms embraced ?
What mighty cares my mind distress,
Ohoi † river ! thou whose waters haste
In rapid tumult onward sped,
As fleeting often is the love of man,
Yet 'tis not fickleness I dread
In him I love, but 'neath misfortune's ban
Our love's full flow'r can hardly blow.
Our feet upon Shiradsuka's bridge now stand,
Past Yoshida we further go
To Akasaka ; our wearied limbs demand
Repose ; the beckoning women ‡ cry
That throng the door of every inn § 'Fair Bride
To Kyomid's ¶ far-famed temple hie,
To Otawa's ‖ plashing fall there choose a guide,

* *Utsu, utsutsu,* 'to sleep, dream,' etc.

† *Ohoi* means 'great,' vast.' The River Ohoi is one of the largest in Japan, and the bed of it, at the point where a ferry carries travellers on the Tokaido across it, must be many hundred yards wide. But, except occasionally during the heavy autumn inundations, the stream is not more than one or two hundred yards in breadth, occupying a sinuous channel in the middle of the dried-up stony bed of the river's course.

‡ These are servants who tout for guests.

§ What follows seems to be a portion of an ancient song, to be found, I believe, in the *Shinzenden* of Bakin, and as old probably as the time of the Ashikaga Shoguns.

¶ Kyomids. See *ante.*

‖ Otawa. This is a pretty stream of water falling over the ledge of a rock in the grounds of the temple of Kyomids, supposed to have peculiar restorative qualities.

And there, fair Bride, some space delay,
Adore the deity's temple and view
How to Kwanon * the pilgrims pay
With sacred dance and music homage due,
Then join in the applauding shout
And share the merry throng's loud happiness.'
'Not so, my tale of tender doubt
To my chosen lord alone I shall confess."

TONASE:

"Right, daughter; were thy lover here
Three suppliants we would Ise's† gods revere."

KONAMI:

"Thus we our clownish verses sing.
To Nar'migata's‡ town we come. Success
The happy name, I trust, may bring.
Ha! Atsta's shrine descry we yonder—yes,

* Kwanon is the Buddhistic Venus, and like the *hominum divomque voluptus, Alma Venus!* of the great Latin poet, is regarded not only as the goddess of life, but as presiding over the continuous sustentation of the world and all its living creatures;

"——per te—genus omne animantum
—— Concepitur, visitque exortum lumina solis."

† Ise is supposed to be the special abode of the primeval gods of Japan, known commonly as Daijingu Sama.

‡ Narumigata, in the common language, means 'the place of establishment of oneself, of the success of one's endeavors.'

Full seven leagues across the bay ;
Haul taut the sail, bend, fellows, bend to th' oar
With measured stroke—away, away—
Haste, haste, for distant still looms yonder shore.
Hark! how loud the rudder's creak!
Meseems the chirp of some small *sudsu* * fly,
Or the grasshopper's unceasing shriek,
Or the grasshopper that, as the old song tells, doth cry
Thro' the chilly nights when the hoarfrosts lie."

TONASE and KONAMI:

" How fierce the hail drives thro' the windy air !
Our heads before its pelt we bend,
We lead, we follow the crossing boats that dare
Still with the hailing storm contend.
Shokane's hill we pass, awhile
At Seki halt, where from the eastern way
Parts stretching south for many a mile
The road to distant Ise,—the merry play
Of packhorse bells we hear as thee

* A sort of small insect, making, by attrition of its wings, a somewhat pleasant sound, and for that reason often kept in bamboo-bark cages, and fed upon bits of cucumber or melon.

We reach, Sudsuka,* Aino-tsuchi's peak†
  Rain dimmed now hardly may we see;
Rain ever dims, men say, its summit bleak.
  O Minaguchi,‡—the rocky vale
Of Ishibe§ we next fatigued toil thro',
  Pass Ohodsu, Mii's‖ temple hail,
The hillside skirt, our further way pursue,
  And now a pretty hamlet nigh.
Yamashina,¶ our journey's end descry."

* *Sudsu* is the name given to the string of bells generally hung round the *tail* of the animal. The pass of Sudsuka—Sudsudatoge—is of considerable height, but the traveller who climbs it is well rewarded by the succession of picturesque views it affords him. † Allusion is here made to the old song—

'Sakawa teru-teru,
Sudsuka wa kumoru,
Aino-tsuchi yama
Ame ga furu.'

Which may be thus rendered—

'Bright i' th' sun gleams Saka's peak,
Clouds veil Sudsuka's summit bleak,
Tsuchi's top between doth lie,
Rain-dimmed hid from traveller's eye.'

Saka, Sudsuka, and Aino-tsuchi are three conspicuous and contiguous hills, forming part of the range crossed by the Sudsuka-toge, on which the phenomenon referred to is often observed during the showery days of early summer.

‡ Meaning strictly, 'the outflow of the waters,' but by a pun signifying 'the mouths of all men,' that is, common report.

§ Literally, 'the stony place.' ‖ From which the finest view of Lake Biwa is to be had.

¶ Yamashina is the last village on the road, being close to Kiyoto.

## THE BALLAD OF TAKASAGO.*

A wanderer's staff he grasps now erst
On distant journey bent :
Must many a weary weary day
On per'lous track be spent.

TOMONARI.

"Of Aso's shrine in Higo land,
Within broad Kiushiu's sway,
The guardian, Tomonari, I ;
Now list ye to my lay :

* Takasago is the name of a coast district in Banshiu (Harima) washed by the waters of the Island Sea, some ninety miles westwards of Ohozaka. The author was one K'wanzei (according to some a writer of the name of Kadsu Mitsuyoshi), a composer of *No*, (historical dramas with musical accompaniments, commonly based upon episodes of the long feud between the Gen and Hei families,) who flourished about the year 1450 A.D. The ballad is often sung—a portion of it at least—as a kind of epithalamium, the changeless verdure and longevity of the pine as exemplified in the two trees of Takasago and Sumiyoshi celebrated by the song forming a theme appropriate to such an occasion.

The persons of the Ballad are :—

Tomonari, a country *kannuski*, or guardian of a Shinto *miya* or shrine.

The Spirit of the Pine Tree of Takasago in the form of an old woman, with a broom in her hand.

The Spirit of the Pine Tree of Sumiyoshi (or Suminoye) in the form of an old man, holding a kind of bamboo rake

The portions not included within inverted commas are on the stage recited or sung by the *utaigata*, or songmen, who thus, to some extent, discharge the functions of a Greek chorus ; while the dialogue is carried on by actors to the accompaniment of music and with appropriate gestures.

Upon Miyako's wondrous sights
  Not ever have I gazed,
And towards the royal city press,
  To feast my eyes amazed.

And by the way I fain would halt,
  And turn a space aside,
Where Takasago's famous strand
  'Fends Harima from the tide.

O he has girded up his froek,
  Nor fears the distant way,
All eager the stately town to gain,
  No longer will delay.

Well through the surf his bark is launched
  Upon the sparkling sea,
O may fair spring winds waft him on,
  Clear skies above him be!

Still o'er the wid'ning wat'ry waste
  His course he presses on,
Beyond the dim, white, misty line
  Where sea and sky seem one.

Beyond, and far beyond again,
  And leagues still leagues upon,
His bark sails o'er the eireling sea
  Ere Harima's shores are won.

O hoar and venerable Pine!
  Thy swaying branches through,
With constant boom, the sweet spring winds,
  And eeaseless murmur, sough.

While from the sounding shore below,
  Where still the mists adhere,
The cadenced roar of the flowing tide
  Delights the wanderer's ear.

O ancient Pine! whose lofty top
  With countless winters' snow
Hath sparkled, is there wight alive
  Thy birth or youth may know?

Amid thy topmost twigs behold!
  The glittering rime doth lie.
Upon the erane's rough-woven nest,
  Ere yet the sun is high.

Each morn, among thy far-spread limbs
The winds soft greetings sing,
Each e'en low murmuring farewells,
Through all this time of spring.

I well could rest beneath thy shade,
There commune with my soul,
And muse in silent loneliness,
While by the hours should roll.

For converse should I ever long,
And seek response from thee,
The rustle of thy wind-stirr'd leaves
Would softly answer me.

Lo! leaves and twigs, the ground bestrew
And to my raiment cling,
I shake me free with busy rake
The brown heap shorewards fling.

O far-famed Pine of Takasago!
How scarred thy wave-washed trunk!
The waves of time, too, on my brow
Have rippled wrinkles sunk.

Long, long have clung to thee, hoar Pine!
These leaves now brown and sere,
With greenness aye renewed thou still
Thy leafy top shalt rear."

TOMONARI.

"I thought some peasant here to meet,
And lo an aged pair
Confront me, yet perchance may they
Me further wand'ring spare."

AN OLD MAN AND AN OLD WOMAN.

"What would'st thou of us? Well will we
All that we know explain."

TOMONARI.

"A stranger your famed Pine would see
Hath come across the main."

THE OLD MAN.

"From Takasago's lofty Pine
The leaves thou see'st us heap,
Are fallen; 'neath the ancient tree
Our guardian watch we keep."

TOMONARI.

"Suminoye's Pine and yon, men say,
Are like a wedded pair,
So far apart, how that may be,
I pray you, sooth, declare!"

THE OLD MAN.

"Thou knowest the roll, 'Songs new and old,'
Therein will find it writ,
How Suminoye's Pine and yon
In wedded bonds are knit."

"Sumiyoshi in the land of Tsu,
Twas there I saw the day;
This dame of Takasago is:
Now ask us aught ye may."

TOMONARI.

"How comes, if ye, so far apart
Saw light, together dwell
Beneath yon Pine? The mystery
Ye doubtless may dispel."

THE SPIRIT OF SUMIYOSHI.

"Thou say'st not wisely, Sir, methinks;
From many a distant source
Down rush the mountain-streams to join
In the river's mightier course.

"And so, by love or fate two souls
Together drawn, make one,
Although ten thousand leagues may seem
To bar their union.

"And sooth, Sir, listen to my words,
And hearken to my say,
The Pine Sumiyoshi's strand o'ershadows
The Pine o'erhead doth sway.

"Are things without the breath of life,
Yet from remotest time
Hath fame them joined in constant love,
Despite wide-sundered clime.

"And shall we twain whose pulses beat
With thrill of active life,
Whom many a year hath closer knit,
From discord free and strife,

"Since first I left my earlier home,
And here sought my dame,
Not still more rightfully to be
United lovers claim?"

TOMONARI.

"How pleasantly thou tell'st the tale,
Ne'er told before, I ween,
How have the bonds of love been knit
These stately pines between."

THE SPIRIT OF SUMIYOSHI.

"Of old, men spoke of them and said,
A happy omen here,
Now peace throughout the land shall reign
Thro' each succeeding year."

THE SPIRIT OF TAKASAGO.

"Long, long ago the ancient fame
Have olden poets sung
Of Takasago's lofty Pine
The 'Myriad leaves'* among."

* The manyoshiu' or 'myriad leaves' is the most extensive, and at the same time the most ancient collection of Jap-

THE SPIRIT OF SUMIYOSHI.

"Great Daigo on Sumiyoshi fair
Bestowed its name, men say,
O blest are those who live beneath *
Our Emperor's gentle sway."

THE SPIRIT OF TAKASAGO.

"The Pine ne'er bared of leafy dress
Still green stands 'gainst the sky,
Unfaded still long years shall stand
Sign of eternity."

THE SPIRIT OF SUMIYOSHI.

"Unchanged through ages be the glory
Of Sumiyoshi's tree,
Fair emblem of the constant peace
These happy days shall see."

anese poetry known. It seems to have been compiled about the commencement of the ninth century, and no doubt contains poems of a much older date—all in pure archaic Japanese, free from any admixture of Chinese. See the article in the West. Rev., cited supra.

* There is here in the original a play upon words difficult to render. 'Sumiyoshi' means 'fair are our abodes, happy our lives.'

TOMONARI.

"O sweet your speech a calm so sweet
My troubled mind doth bring,
O clear my soul from vexing doubts,
O clear the day of spring."

THE SPIRIT OF SUMIYOSHI.

"O clear the sunny day of spring,
Lo! o'er the eastern sea,
Sumiynahi's shores we may descry,
From 'neath Takasago's tree."

THE SPIRITS OF TAKASAGO AND TOMONARI.

"When green leaves sparkle set so fair
Against blue sea and sky,
Ah sweet, full sweet the spring time is,
Bright shines the sun on high."

"How calm our land, embosom'd mid
The four encireling seas,
How soft the murmuring awaked
By the lightly blowing breeze.

"So lightly felt in our happy land
Our mighty Emperor's sway,
O constant Pair, your gladness add *
And join in my poor lay.

"Though poor it be, for how shall any
In fitting couplets sing
Of all the joys our gracious Lord
Doth to his people bring."

TOMONARI.

"The story of yon lofty pine
Well have ye told to me,
Tall trees and lowly herbs men say
But lifeless things these be.

"Yet well tall trees and lowly herbs
Their appointed seasons know,
The Spring's mysterious power obey,
Sunward their blossoms show." †

*When sung as an epithalamium the ballad usually ends with this stanza. The text here is utterly untranslatable owing to the word plays, and I have therefore not been able to give more than the bare idea of the original.

†"———Vere rosam, frumenta calore
Viteis auctumno fundi suadente videmus"—Lucr.

THE SPIRITS OF SUMIYOSHI AND TAKASAGO.

"The Pine no change of season owns,
Its foliage ever green
In summer heat, 'neath winter snow,
For a thousand years is seen."

THE SPIRIT OF SUMIYOSHI.

"Explained the tale of Takasago,
Suminoye's story told,
The antique legend now thou may'st
To all the world unfold.

"All living things from mother earth,
Their life and being gain,
And nature, nowhere voiceless, sings
A universal strain."*

"Tall trees and lowly herbs, stones, sand,
The soil our feet do press,
The winds and floods and all known things
A soul divine possess.

* This stanza is a quotation from a poem contained in the collection known as Kokinshiu.

"The murmuring of the gentle zephyrs
Amid the woods of spring,
The hum of insect 'mong the dews
Autumn abroad doth fling.

"Are these not strains of Nature's song;
Her universal voice
In sigh of breeze, in purl of stream,
We hear and must rejoice.

"Sublime its lofty top uprears
The peerless Pine on high,
For a thousand autumns still hath flung
Against the azure sky

"Its fair-spread branches, vestur'd e'er
With dress of changeless green;
Well Shiko's* favor were here bestowed,
Well men's loud praise I ween."

* The allusion is explained in the following song:

Shin no Shiko
Mikari no toki,
Ten niwaka ni kaki-kumori,
Tai-u shikiri ni furishikaba,

"The wind booms through the stiff-set leaves,
Mid which the morning rime
Glitters, the deep green hue shall still
Endure throughout all time.

"Aye morn and eve the leaves fall thick,
Yet still the ancient tree
With all its leafy glory clothed,
Shall ne'er unvestured be,

"Ne'er bared its dress of deep, deep green,
As by the long years roll;
E'en to the leafy Kadsura* nature
Doth briefer being dole.

* *Masaki no Kadsura* (*Bignonia grandiflora* of Thunberg). The Japanese suppose this climber to have an indefinite term of existence.

Mikado ame wo shinogan to,
Komatsu no kage ni
Tachi-yoreba,
Kono matsu tachimachi taiboko to nari,
Yedo wo tare, ha wo kasane;
Kono ame wo morasazarishikaba Mikado
Ta-iu to iu shaku wo
Kono matsu ni okuri
Tamaishi yori
Matsu wo Ta-iu to mosu to ka ya.

A spirited translation of the above appeared in the *Japan Weekly Mail* of March 10th, 1875, on the basis of which the following version has been attempted.

"And ever monarchs of all trees
Shall either hoary Pine
Through happy ages reign supreme
Of constant Love the sign."

Shin no Shiko
Once a-hawking did go;
All at once the clouds lowered,
And down the rain poured,
Ho! the Emperor must not get wet.

An ancient pine-tree
Seemed good shelter to be,
And 'neath it did he go,
When the branches grew so
Thro' the thick leaves the rain could not get.

'Twas the Emperor's whim
That the tree should from him
Have a *shaku* with Ta-iu writ on,
'Twas no sooner said than 'twas done,
And the pine-tree's called Taiu e'en yet.

The point lies in a word-play upon 'Tai-u' and 'Ta-iu—the former signifying 'great rain,' the latter being the name of a certain high rank.

A *shaku* was a sort of tablet on which memoranda were noted. The word also means a degree in rank.

Shin no Shiko is the Chinese Emperor Cheng or She Hwang-ti, who flourished between B.C. 259 and B.C. 210, and first consolidated the petty feudal states of China into one vast Empire. (See Mayers' "Chinese Reader's Manual," Article 597.)

"Well merit ye, tall Pines, your name,*
Ye seem with pride to say,
Your peers may fade and pine and die,
Ye ne'er shall pass away."

THE SPIRIT OF SUMIYOSHI.

"Sir Wanderer, hearken to my words,
Twain guardian spirits we,
Of Suminoye's tall Pine, I,
Of Takasago's, she."

TOMONARI.

"Full strange the tale ye tell, me seems,
A land of marvels this,
Of either Pine ye would reveal,
Some deep mysterious bliss."

THE SPIRITS OF SUMIYOSHI AND TAKASAGO.

"Tall trees and lonely herbs possess
Of soul divine a share."

TOMONARI.

"O wise mankind are grown beneath
Our Emperor's fostering care."

* The word *matsu*, 'pine,' means also 'to wait, endure,' and the compound *matsdai* signifies 'to the end of time.

THE SPIRITS OF SUMIYOSHI AND TAKASAGO.

"Our lord is lord of all the land,
Of all the land bestows,
O long beneath his gracious sway
May men enjoy repose!

"Towards Sumiyoshi, abode of Peace,
Come, Wanderer, turn thy feet,
There pleasantly shall glide the hours
In various converse sweet.

"A fisher-bark they launch, aloft
They hoist the narrow sail,
Far o'er the evening waters speed
Before the favoring gale,

"Towards where Awaji's isle looms high
Above the heaving sea,
And leagues on leagues they sail ere that
Suminoye's on their lee."

THE SPIRIT OF SUMIYOSHI.

"Thou Pine that rearest thy lofty top
On Sumiyoshi's shore,
Ne'er since—ah me how long ago!
Thy stately form I saw,

"Have I thy glory ceased to own,
Through many a wakeful night,
Or the mem'ry lost of the secret bond
Doth me with thee unite.

"And thou, Sir Priest, before thy shrine,
Round fenced with red-stained pale,
May beat of drum at holy feast,
And sacred mime ne'er fail.

TOMONARI. "Lo! westwards o'er the heaving waters,
Beyond the purple sea,
S. OF S. Still Takasago's shore we view,
Where stands the lordly tree."

TOMONARI. "Here store of Tamamo herb wherewith
At New Year homes are dressed;
S. OF S. At foot of yon tall Pine reclined,
Our limbs we well might rest."

TOMONARI. "The dead leaves of the deathless tree
Upon me withering fall,
S. OF S. With wild plum's flowering branchlet I
My wrinkled brow enthrall."

TOMONARI.

"Upon my raiment snow-flakes glitter ;
Beneath the streaming moon,
With gods in godlike revel to join
How glorious the boon."

THE SPIRIT OF SUMIYOSHI.

"Hark to the music of the sea,
Sweet as the maidens' song,
Who urge the sacred mime before
The temple-crowding throng.

"Behold how yon tall Pine's vast shadow
Trembles with ceaseless quiver,
Upon the moonlight waters mirrored,
At every wavelet's shiver."

TOMONARI.

"O bless the land the gods' behests
And god gi'en chiefs obey :
To high Miako's lordly town
Still distant is the way."

"May troops of maidens welcome thee
As chief from victory,
A thousand, thousand blessings I pray
Ever attend on thee.

"White-robed when thou at holy feast
Invok'st the gods high grace
Thine outstretched arm all ill avert,
And every good embrace.

"O for a thousand autumns may
The people peaceful be,
For full ten thousand years enjoy
Long-life, prosperity."

"How softly sweetly sings the breeze,
O everlasting Pine!
Among thy far-flung leafy limbs
Whereunder I recline,
And I could lie, well pleased to list
To music such as thine. *

* This last stanza is sung or recited by the "Utaigata."

## PREFACE OF THE AUTHOR.

(*Original Text Reproduced opposite.*)

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# KANA TEHON CHIUSHINGURA,

# DAIJO.

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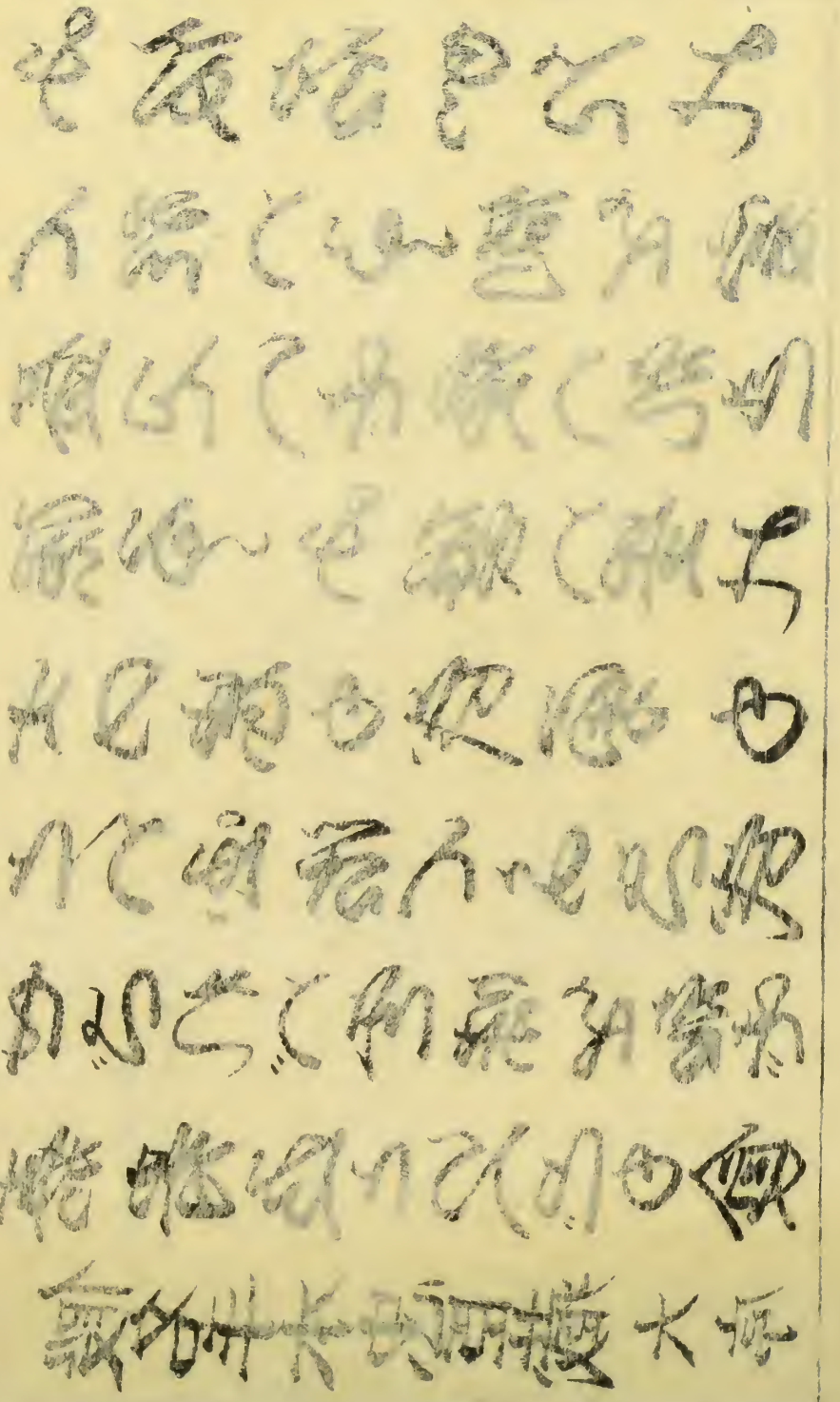
Kako ari to ihedomo shokusezareba sono ajiwai wo shiradzu to wa, kuni osamatte yoki bushi no chiu mo buyû mo kakururu ni, tatoheba hoshi no hiru miyedsu yoru wa midarete arawaruru tameshi wo koko ni kanagaki no.

# 假名手本忠臣蔵　大序

嘉肴あるとも食せざれば味を知ることなし。学問ありとも治てふさぎ武士の忠も武勇も限るの外塞の塞ぬ益ふしも疾の孔も一程ある例を寄み仮名のたよ



今を始めの旅衣（旅衣）日も重ねつつ（重）末遠き（遠）
旅の空（旅）
憂き九州肥後の國阿蘇の宮（宮）神主友成とは我が事也（我）
都より（都）
都より（都）の又遥けき（遥）
都より（都）
都より（都）の又遥けき（遥）
都より（都）
都より（都）の又遥けき（遥

何ものぞといふ「言ふ」ふ乃ふ「ん」ふ「ん」ふ「ん」

あらきね清代あれぬのひはおきのねとそやたかりけ
き実ね阿まそもともおろやうよたとある氏と
て詩との多る者乃至こう有絵もく狩くる物の私北
渭南の郡詔人（この北 木梢ニ大字ヲ書ス）ことを有ると千まもとも花実の
時をたく次陽春北極ともれて南枝花もめて開々
（シテ）
（シテ）
（シテ）

むつ歌やして其名を名乗給へや　今松をの浦む
百千年を経る松の心もて君の稚子を守と現しまつり
ふまき木枕の名所の松の声を教りて可美心を思れ
ども賢き代そと古も我大君の國なれは詠まて
も高き代と恒言を先立てあれなく綾やきんと夕浪の
汀を海士乃小舟にて来て迎風よ沖の方へ
よ出よとそ呼ぶ今やさ浦私る帆をおけそ月統うる
比出ほの波の淀路の鴻かきや幸くあるそ津るそよ
恒の白雲立つ　我乙つも久〳〵成ぬ恒言等の
姫松いく世ならんかまと考へ古の跡や瑞籬の久〳〵
きよれ秋ふの歌の稲を振てそ〳〵あなま宮つ社
西乃海あそきこの赤土浪容より　あらされ出〳〵神
松の声あれや昨の雪れ知のかこ玉藻こるきき
〳〵張乃松根よ備こあ〳〵さ礼ふ年七聖まれ
みこと梅花を折こ頭よさゝ八三月の望夜よあ
社有難乃御うかやく月恒古七神遊ひこと
物哉高のたさよ妻さ海〳〵七亀姫乃声も清かう恒
の白松根もうれる青海波とそこれやこの神と
玉との遊さくれ都の春よゆ〳〵こそ更そ遥城
楽七舞　相万歳の小忌衣ヤヲさ取のあよ袂重そ
らひあさもるまにゝ春福とてきま秋楽の民物等
兼ねも命をみるおまの松風頌の聲そ朱〳〵

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